



An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta,
Gnóthaí Réigiúnacha, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta
Department of Arts, Heritage,
Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs



Irish Government Economic & Evaluation Service

An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta, Gnóthaí Réigiúnacha, Tuaithe agus
Gaeltachta

Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Limerick City of Culture – 2014

Ex Post Evaluation

Undertaken by the Evaluation Unit

July 2016

Limerick City of Culture 2014 Ex Post Evaluation

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	3
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	6
1.1. Introduction	6
1.2. Background to the Inaugural National City of Culture	6
1.3. Rationale for the evaluation.....	6
1.4. Objectives of the Evaluation.....	7
1.5. Methodology.....	7
1.5.1. Outputs: Application of the European Capitals of Culture Evaluation Framework	7
1.5.2. Stakeholder Perceptions of the City of Culture –Experience, Impact and Legacy	13
1.5.3. Activity: Administration and Funding	13
1.5.4. Data Sources	14
1.5.5. Methodological Challenges.....	14
1.6. Report Structure	15
CHAPTER 2: ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION.....	16
2.1. Administrative Oversight by the Department.....	16
2.2. Limerick National City of Culture 2014 Ltd.	16
2.3. Organisation Structure and Staff Costs.....	19
2.4. Administration Costs.....	23
CHAPTER 3: INCOME & EXPENDITURE	27
3.1. Income & Expenditure Overview.....	27
3.2. Estimated Versus Actual Income & Expenditure.....	27
3.3. Income	30

3.3.1.	Public Sector Funding	30
3.3.2.	Sponsorship	36
3.3.3.	Event Receipts and Box Office	38
3.4.	Expenditure.....	40
CHAPTER 4: OUTPUT ANALYSIS – CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION.....		46
4.1.	Evaluation Framework & Specific Objectives.....	46
4.2.	Creativity and Innovation	46
4.3.	Projects and Events	47
4.4.	Value of Cultural Programme	51
4.4.1.	International Programme	52
4.4.2.	Commissioning.....	54
4.4.3.	Legacy	57
4.4.4.	‘Made in Limerick’.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.4.5.	Other Projects.....	62
4.5.	Number of Artists Employed/Supported	63
4.6.	Original Works	65
4.7.	Stakeholder Perspectives	67
CHAPTER 5: OUTPUT ANALYSIS – ACCESS, PARTNERSHIP & CONNECTIVITY		70
5.1.	Access and Participation	70
5.1.1.	Attendance at Limerick City of Culture Events	70
5.1.2.	Attendance by group –disadvantaged communities, young people and others.....	73
5.1.3.	Volunteers.....	77
5.1.4.	Stakeholder Perspectives: Access and Participation	79
5.2.	Partnership and Collaboration	80
5.2.1.	Value of investment in cultural infrastructure	81
5.2.2.	Artistic Collaborations	82
5.2.3.	Long-Term Strategy	83
5.2.4.	Stakeholder Perspectives.....	83
5.3.	Passport and Connectivity.....	85
5.3.1.	Tourism.....	86
5.3.2.	Media Coverage.....	90
5.3.3.	Awareness & Attitudes	92
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		96
6.1.	Conclusions	96
6.1.1.	Efficiency.....	96

6.1.2.	Effectiveness	97
6.1.3.	Perceived Impact & Legacy	99
6.2.	Recommendations	99
6.2.1.	Strategic Planning	99
6.2.2.	Administration & Operation	100
6.2.3.	Evaluation & Impact Assessment.....	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY		102
APPENDIX 1: THEMATIC CLUSTERS AND RESULTS INDICATORS RECOMMENDED BY THE EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE POLICY GROUP		104
APPENDIX 2: BOARD OF DIRECTORS, LIMERICK NATIONAL CITY OF CULTURE LTD.		105

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out the rationale for, objectives of and methodology used in this evaluation. It also sets out the background to the National City of Culture initiative and the designation of Limerick as the Inaugural city to receive the designation.

1.2. Background to the Inaugural National City of Culture

The National City of Culture initiative builds on the model of the European Capital of Culture (which Dublin and Cork held in 1991 and 2005 respectively) and follows a similar initiative in the UK, which saw Derry/Londonderry designated as the UK City of Culture in 2014. Its overarching objective is to deliver a specific programme of cultural events and engagement over a one-year period with a view to stimulating a longer-term awareness of and participation in arts and cultural events.

Important principles in delivering on this objective are as follows:

- Supporting community involvement in planning and delivering events during the title year;
- Increasing participation in the arts by local residents, especially from disadvantaged communities;
- Encouraging the involvement of local schools in the organisation and delivery of events;
- Fostering creativity within communities;
- Maximising existing cultural infrastructure and facilities to the benefit of the arts; and
- Delivering a long-term positive impact on awareness of and participation in the arts within the city.

In July 2012, Limerick City was awarded the inaugural designation of National City of Culture for 2014. An important aspect of this first designation was the change programme already underway in Limerick in terms of the amalgamation of the city and county councils, the ongoing regeneration programme and other initiatives to promote Limerick city e.g. the Economic Forum. Given the EU Commission reported finding in 2004¹ that the designation of European Capital of Culture serves as a catalyst for the cultural development and transformation of the chosen city, the designation of Limerick as the first National City of Culture was seen as an opportunity to further boost these renewal efforts in Limerick.

1.3. Rationale for the evaluation

Ensuring value for money for public investment is the primary objective of the new Public Spending Code, which emphasises the importance of employing good review and evaluation practices at all stages of the expenditure life cycle. This includes ex-post evaluations. While the code emphasises analyses of the economic costs and benefits of policy and investment decisions, it recognises that there may also be social, cultural or other public policy considerations which inform the decision-

¹ Palmer/Rae Associates (2004) *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study prepared for the European Commission*, Brussels. http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en.htm

making process. This is of particular relevance in the context of public investment in the arts and cultural sectors.

1.4. Objectives of the Evaluation

The Evaluation Unit provides analysis, research and evaluation services to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA). Its primary objective is to ensure that decisions on policy and programmes are evidence-based, have clear objectives, and are subject to rigorous appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. As part of its functions, the Evaluation Unit undertakes a range of discrete evaluations of Departmental funding and activities to assess value for money achieved and to inform future decision-making by the Department.

This *ex post* evaluation of the Limerick City of Culture is being carried out for the following reasons:

- To assess the performance of the inaugural City of Culture, and identify areas for improvement for future designations;
- To assess whether the Limerick City of Culture year achieved its objectives and demonstrated value for money for the investment; and
- To ensure that the expenditure of public monies is transparent in its allocation, use and the evaluation of the impacts of the expenditure.

1.5. Methodology

Given that Limerick received the inaugural designation as a national city of culture it was not possible to use an existing evaluation methodology to assess its performance in delivering on its objectives². To address this, and to ensure that some comparison with similar initiatives could be undertaken, the evaluation framework used for European Capitals of Culture was adapted to assess the achievement of the National City of Culture's objectives. To provide context for the assessment of the City of Culture's outputs, it was considered useful to examine some aspects of the administration and operation of the company charged with delivering the cultural programme. In addition, an examination of stakeholder perspectives of the legacy of the initiative was also undertaken. Details on the methodologies applied to each of these elements are discussed in the following sections.

1.5.1. Outputs: Application of the European Capitals of Culture Evaluation Framework

The European Capitals of Culture Policy Group³, which advised the EU Commission on evaluation methodologies for the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) over the period 2009 to 2010,

² The use of the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture (2013) as a possible comparator was considered in the development of the evaluation methodology, however, at the time of writing the evaluation had not been completed.

³ This group, supported and funded by the EU Commission, consisted of members of previous ECoC projects and was mandated to develop recommendations for a best-practice approach to evaluating the ECoC. The group included members of the Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008 project which is widely seen as the exemplar for evaluation of the ECoC. https://ecocpolicygroup.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/ecoc-policy-group_research-framework1.pdf

recommended an holistic approach to any city of culture evaluation, incorporating socio-cultural aspects, economic aspects, environmental aspects, and creative capacity building, as well as the more regulatory evaluations of financial management, project governance etc. An overview of the six thematic clusters and associated results indicators, recommended by the group, is set out at appendix 1.

The Group also recommended the establishment of a baseline prior to the commencement of preparations for a city of culture designation and the measurement of outputs and outcomes relative to that baseline during and after the title year. Due to the short timeframe in the preparation of the City of Culture year, relative to the five year period provided for a Capital of Culture year, no formal baseline was established for the social impacts, although an *ex ante* examination of economic impacts was undertaken.

Based, in part, on the recommendations of the Group, the European Commission has developed an evaluation framework for the Capitals of Culture initiative for use in the *ex post* evaluations of the ECoC which it commissions each year. The evaluation framework is presented in table 1.1, which identifies the four specific objectives of the ECoC and proposes a set of result indicators to determine the level of success or otherwise in achieving each of the objectives.

Table 1.1 ECoC Evaluation Framework

European Capital of Culture			
Hierarchy of Objectives			
General Objective			
Safeguard and promote the diversity of European cultures, highlight the common features they share, and foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities.			
Specific Objectives			
1: Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation.	2: Widen access to and participation in culture.	3: Strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sector and its connectivity with other sectors.	4. Improve the international profile of cities through culture.
Core Result Indicators			
Total number of projects and events	Attendance at ECoC events	Value (financial) of investment in cultural infrastructure, sites and facilities	Increase in tourist visits
Value (financial) of ECoC cultural programme	% of residents attending or participating in events, including young, disadvantaged or 'culturally inactive' people	Sustained multi-sector partnership for cultural governance	Media coverage of city
No. of European Cross-border co-operations within the ECoC cultural programme	No. of volunteers	Private sector contributions	Improved image
		Strategy for long-term cultural development of the city	Awareness of the ECoC among residents

In the absence of another National City of Culture, either in Ireland or in another jurisdiction, against which to compare the Limerick year, it was considered appropriate to examine the feasibility of using the ECoC framework as the basis for the evaluation. This would have the dual benefit of using an already tested methodology as well as facilitating direct comparison with ECoC outputs.

The general and specific objectives identified for the ECoC evaluation were compared with the mission statement and four pillars (specific objectives) identified by the Limerick City of Culture. An analysis of the specific objectives found that there is a significant overlap between the City of Culture objectives and the ECoC model, making the application of the ECoC model suitable for application to the Limerick example. Table 1.2 maps the specific objectives of both, demonstrating how the ECoC model may be applied to Limerick.

Table 1.2 ECoC specific objectives and related Limerick City of Culture pillars

ECoC Specific Objectives	1 Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation.	2. Widen access to and participation in culture.	3. Strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sector and its connectivity with other sectors.	4. Improve the international profile of cities through culture.
Limerick City of Culture Pillars	1. Creativity and Innovation	2. Access and Participation	3. Partnership and Collaboration	4. Passport and Connectivity

As shown in Table 1.1 each specific objective under the ECoC evaluation framework is underpinned by a set of research indicators. In applying this framework to Limerick, these research indicators have been used to the greatest extent possible, as set out in table 1.3. This was not possible in all cases, due to the absence of the necessary data for the following indicators:

- % residents (as distinct from visitors) attending. Although the Economic Impact Assessment commissioned by the Limerick City of Culture and undertaken by Grant Thornton did include estimates of such attendance, they were based on broad assumptions rather than specific data; and
- Number and profile of multi-sector partnerships for cultural initiatives. The Limerick City of Culture saw significant support from Limerick City and County Council, as well as a broad involvement from the private, public and cultural sectors on its board. However, detail on specific projects involving multi-sector partnerships was not available for this evaluation.

This challenge could be addressed for future Cities of Culture by ensuring that all of the ECoC research indicators are included as part of the approach to evaluation/data-collection prior to the title year.

In addition, the indicator on the number of European cross-border co-operations was altered, examining the number of new artistic collaborations under the partnership and collaboration pillar

instead. The new indicator provides a breakdown of collaborations between Limerick, national and international artists.

The set of ECoC research indicators has also been augmented by additional indicators for which data were available, as follows:

- Number of original works commissioned;
- Number of artists employed/supported;
- Change in visitor spend (for the Shannon region); and
- Total number of international events/collaborations.

Table 1.3 Limerick City of Culture – Evaluation Framework

Limerick City of Culture			
Mission Statement			
Take different elements of both our traditional and modern culture and establish Limerick as an internationally recognised location for culture in 2014 and beyond.		The mission for the year is to provide cultural access for all within the City and its hinterland and to creatively connect with the outside world.	
Specific Objectives			
1. Creativity and Innovation	2. Access and Participation	3. Partnership and Collaboration	4. Passport and Connectivity
Key Research Indicators			
Total number of projects and events	Attendance at LCoC events	Value (financial) of investment in cultural infrastructure, sites and facilities	Increase in tourist visits
Value (financial) of cultural programmes	Number of projects and resulting attendances from disadvantaged communities, young people, or "culturally inactive" groups.	Number and level of private sector contributions	Change in visitor spend
Number of artists employed/supported	Number of volunteers	Number of new artistic collaborations established.	Tone and level of media coverage of city and LCoC
Number of original art works commissioned		Development of a strategy for long-term cultural development of the city	Measurement of any change in the image of the city - among residents, visitors, nationally
			Measurement of awareness of and attitude to LCoC among residents and visitors
			Total number of international events, collaborations etc.

1.5.2. *Stakeholder Perceptions of the City of Culture –Experience, Impact and Legacy*

As part of the evaluation a number of online surveys were undertaken to assess the awareness, experience and perceptions of legacy of the Limerick City of Culture among three stakeholder groups: the public, funding recipients (known as project contacts), and sponsors. The survey questions were developed having regard to the stated objectives of Limerick City of Culture, as well as existing stakeholder surveys in the arts and culture sector including the Arts Council England's *Stakeholder Focus Research* (2015), TGI Audience Research commissioned by the Arts Council, and *Liverpool Arts Sector – Sustainability and Experience* (2009).

Limerick City of Culture mailing lists for the three groups were used with the following sample sizes and response rates:

Table 1.4 **Sample size & response rates**

Stakeholder surveys	Sample	Response Rate
Public	1036	12.93%
Sponsors	34	5.88%
Project Contacts	156	17.95%

Unfortunately, due to the low response rate among the sponsors group (5.88%), it is not considered to be sufficiently representative for inclusion in the analysis. Although the response rate of 12.93% for the public survey is low, it is within the normal range for such surveys of 10-15%. The highest response rate of 17.95% was for project contacts, although given that the survey was sent by Limerick City of Culture to these funding recipients, it is also considered lower than expected, although sufficient for analysis purposes.

The surveys examined the perceptions of respondents on their own and the city-wide experiences of Limerick City of Culture, their assessment of how well it achieved its stated objectives, and finally, their perceptions of the likely legacy of the year. Aggregate responses to individual questions are used in Chapters 4 and 5 of the report.

1.5.3. *Activity: Administration and Funding*

The European Capitals of Culture Policy Group also recommends that consideration be given to the management of the process as part of the evaluation of the ECoC. This is also, since 2014, part of the annual evaluation of the ECoC commissioned by the European Commission. Given the importance of understanding the funding environment and activities of the Limerick City of Culture organisation in delivering the cultural programme, it was considered important to examine the following aspects as part of this *ex post* evaluation:

- Actual income streams relative to estimated income;
- Budgeted and actual expenditure; and
- Governance structure and delivery body.

1.5.4. *Data Sources*

To undertake the three elements of the evaluation identified above, the following data were identified and/or collected:

- International literature review: This included EU policy and legislative briefings, decisions, evaluations and other documents relating to the ECoC. It also included academic literature on the ECoC. In addition, the literature review examined documents related to the UK national city of culture and the Impacts 08 study of the Liverpool Capital of Culture.
- Quantitative data: The majority of data on expenditure, project numbers and types, and participation and audience figures was from self-reported information collected by Limerick National City of Culture Ltd. from funded projects. The provision of such data was a condition of funding, which was, for the most part, complied with. These data are largely complete with ten projects not providing a full response, however the company advised that the figures have not been the subject of any review for accuracy. In addition, information on budgets for the year was provided directly by Limerick National City of Culture Ltd. but were not accompanied by a final set of financial data disaggregated by project.
- Secondary data: The Limerick National City of Culture Ltd. commissioned independent economic and social impact studies of the initiative, as well as other research including media analysis, a report on volunteering activity etc. Some of the data gathered as part of these research projects has been used in this report.
- Interviews with key stakeholders: A number of key stakeholders from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Limerick City and County Council, Limerick National City of Culture 2014 Ltd., private sector sponsors and funding recipients were interviewed about their experience of the City of Culture year, its planning, delivery and legacy. These interviews informed the analysis
- Surveys: As discussed in the previous section three online surveys were undertaken to establish the views of the public, funding recipients and private sector sponsors of the City of Culture year.

1.5.5. *Methodological Challenges*

The methodological challenges to evaluating the effectiveness of public investment in the arts and culture are well recognised in the international literature. Specifically, the following challenges identified in the literature, apply to this evaluation:

- Policy objectives within the sector are often vague and difficult to define and measure. This is, in part, due to the absence of agreed definitions for many concepts including arts, culture, creativity etc.;
- Many of the activities of the arts and culture sector are difficult to characterise with quantitative indicators – this leads to an absence of consistent and quality data;
- The impacts of the arts and culture may be a long time in gestation. Limited longitudinal data limits the ability of researchers to demonstrate these impacts; and
- Causal relationships are often difficult to prove, particularly when dealing with societal or economic impacts.

Another challenge for this evaluation is that it does not allow for the measurement and analysis of changes over time. This is due to the absence of a comprehensive baseline against which the outputs of the Limerick City of Culture can be examined. That said, the application of the European Commission evaluative framework, which facilitates comparisons between the Limerick City of Culture and recent European Capitals of Culture, mitigates against this somewhat.

In relation to the online survey to assess perceptions and experiences of the Limerick City of Culture, it should be noted that there may be an inherent bias among respondents due to the way the sample was generated. In relation to the funding recipients – only those artists who received grant funding as part of the City of Culture year were surveyed. Accordingly, the views they express, particularly in relation to the operation of the organisation, may be more favourable than those of artists who were unsuccessful in their application for funding. In addition, the public survey was circulated to individuals who had signed up for the Limerick National City of Culture Ltd.'s email updates and newsletter. This suggests that the individuals on the list have already expressed an interest in the year and as such, may have greater awareness of the activities and outputs of the year than the general public.

1.6. Report Structure

As previously noted, this evaluation aims to consider whether the objectives of the Limerick City of Culture were appropriate and consistent with international best practice, as well as examining the level to which the City of Culture year achieved those objectives. To do this, the report takes the following structure:

- Chapter 1 – This chapter sets out the background to the National City of Culture initiative as well as outlining the objectives, rationale and methodology for the evaluation. It also highlights some of the limitations of the research.
- Chapter 2 – Examines the administration and operation of the Limerick National City of Culture 2014 Ltd., benchmarking its performance against best practice examples and international evidence.
- Chapter 3 – This chapter sets out the income received by the Limerick City of Culture year as well as analysing how that income was used to deliver the programme. Both the income and expenditure are examined relative to initial budgets and international examples.
- Chapter 4 – This chapter analyses the outputs of the City of Culture under the creativity and innovation pillar, examining the number and distribution of events and projects, the value of the cultural programme broken down by programmes strand, the levels of artists supported and the number of original works commissioned;
- Chapter 5 – This chapter examines the outputs for the remaining three pillars; access and participation, partnership and collaboration and passport and connectivity, as well as examining the perceptions of the impact and legacy of the year among the stakeholder groups based on responses to the online surveys; and
- Chapter 6 – This concluding chapter brings together the conclusions and recommendations arising from the analysis in the earlier chapters.

Chapter 2: Administration and Operation

This chapter outlines the administration and operational arrangements in place for the Limerick city of culture year.

2.1. Administrative Oversight by the Department

The Department set the policy priorities for the City of Culture initiative (listed in section 1.3 above) and provided the majority of funding for the year by means of a grant. Operational oversight, in terms of approving the programme for the year and the delivery of that programme and including funding draw down, was provided by the Arts, Film and Music Section of the Department's Arts Division. The provision of funding was subject to compliance with public financial procedures, the public spending code and national and EU procurement rules and procedures.

To facilitate this oversight function the Department put in place a number of agreements with the Limerick local authorities, as follows:

- Heads of agreement signed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Joint City and County Council manager – Conn Murray. These heads were signed on 6 January 2014 and set out the broad parameters for the administrative relationship between the Department and the local authorities;
- Service level agreement signed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the City and County Council manager. The service level agreement was signed on 24 February 2014 and provided detailed arrangements for the drawdown of funding, approval of the programme and programme changes, and other administration arrangements;
- An addendum to the service level agreement outlining a protocol for legacy and commissioning projects signed 10 June 2014; and
- A further addendum, containing amendments to the February service level agreement, including increases in the total grant funding available and the funding for the initiative's administration, was signed on 23 December 2014.

A representative of the Department was also entitled to attend meetings of the Board of the Limerick National City of Culture 2014 Ltd. with observer status, however, this opportunity was not taken up given the oversight provisions put in place as part of the heads of and service level agreement.

2.2. Limerick National City of Culture 2014 Ltd.

The Limerick City of Culture initiative was delivered by the Limerick National City of Culture 2014 Ltd., a special-purpose, not for profit entity. The company was established as a wholly owned subsidiary of Limerick City and County Council to develop, promote and deliver a programme of cultural events in the Limerick Region over 2014. The company was primarily funded by a Government grant provided by the Department to the Local Authority for use on the City of Culture initiative, with additional income from Local Authority grants, sponsorship and box office revenues. The company also received in-kind benefits in terms of staff and financial management supports

(from the Local Authority) and marketing and advertising from its private sector sponsorships including from RTÉ, Independent Newspapers and Fáilte Ireland.

The company was overseen by a Board of Directors (listed at appendix 2). The Board included a broad representation incorporating elected members from Limerick City and County Council (4) and representatives of the Council’s executive (2), from the arts and community sector (5), from the private sector (2), commercial semi-state sector (1), and sports sector (1). The board was chaired by former MEP Pat Cox and also included Tim O’Connor, former Secretary General to the President.

A critical analysis of the composition of the Board was undertaken, based on the recent call for expressions of interest in membership of the Board of the Irish Museum of Modern Art. The call for expressions of interest was undertaken by the public appointments service and included the following skills mix for the Board:

- Experience of Philanthropy and Fundraising;
- Business, Branding, and Financial Management Experience;
- Management and Corporate Governance Experience;
- Professional Legal Experience;
- Experience of Irish and International Art Sector; and
- Experience of Education and Research.

Of these six skill sets, only five were assessed as part of this evaluation as having direct relevance for the Board of the Limerick National City of Culture 2014, with experience of education and research being excluded as this has more relevance to an organisation with a specific educational function and a long-term operation. On this basis, table 2.1 sets out the skills matrix for the board of the company. The matrix excludes the four elected members of Limerick City and County Council as their presence on the board was as public representatives rather than for their specific skill sets.

Table 2.1 Board Skills Matrix

Philanthropy and Fundraising	Business, Branding and Financial Management	Management and Corporate Governance Experience	Professional Legal Experience	Experience of Irish and International Art Sector
Pat Cox	David O’Hora (Branding)	Neil Pakey		Orlaith McBride
Paul O’Connell	Brian McEnery (Corporate Finance)	Conn Murray		Bill Whelan
Tim O’Connor	Tom Gilligan (Financial & Business Management)	Tim O’Connor		Karen O’Donnell O’Connor
				Louise Donlon
				James John Lawlor

Of the five skill sets identified, it is clear that the Board members had sufficient experience in four out of five of the categories, with a particularly strong showing in the experience of the Irish and international art sector. It should be noted that the board was expanded in early 2014 to include additional members from the arts sector which has contributed to this finding. That said, the Board did lack a member with professional legal experience to ensure the company complied with all necessary legal requirements. Legal advice was provided to the Board by the Company's legal advisers, Homes O'Malley Sexton, on instruction. While the risk of this was no doubt mitigated by the significant management and corporate governance experience of the Board, future Cities of Culture companies should ensure that the skills matrix is fully applied.

In terms of the operation of the Board, the evaluation examined its performance against the requirements set out in the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* (2009). While the company is not a State body, it is considered that the Code offers best practice guidelines for the operation of boards and as such offers a useful benchmark against which the Limerick board can be compared. It should be noted, that this assessment did not evaluate each of the procedures and arrangements or their application described above, but rather examined whether they had procedures/arrangements in place.

The following summarises the findings of that assessment:

- The Board had responsibility for the approval of the programme, its individual elements, grant awards⁴ and for regular monitoring expenditure under the programme;
- The Board had an audit committee in place;
- The Board met regularly over the period of operation. During the programme development phase it met on multiple occasions each month, during the delivery of the programme it met monthly, and in the final months of the programme and legacy discussions it met once every two months;
- The Board approved a set of financial policies and procedures (updated in May 2014) outlining the arrangements for purchasing, public procurement, payments, and budget management. It also described the system of internal financial control. It is noted that the Local Government Audit Service raised queries about the absence of evidence of adherence to public procurement guidelines in relation to three payments made in 2013 by the Council, on behalf of the company⁵. It is considered that the financial policies and procedures of the Board, if fully complied with, were sufficient to ensure full compliance in 2014; and

⁴ The Board's approval for the award of grants was sought following the assessment of all applications by a panel of three members. The three members were from the Local Authority, the City of Culture team and from the arts sector.

⁵

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/LocalGovernment/AuditService/2013AuditorsReports/FileDownload,40610,en.pdf>

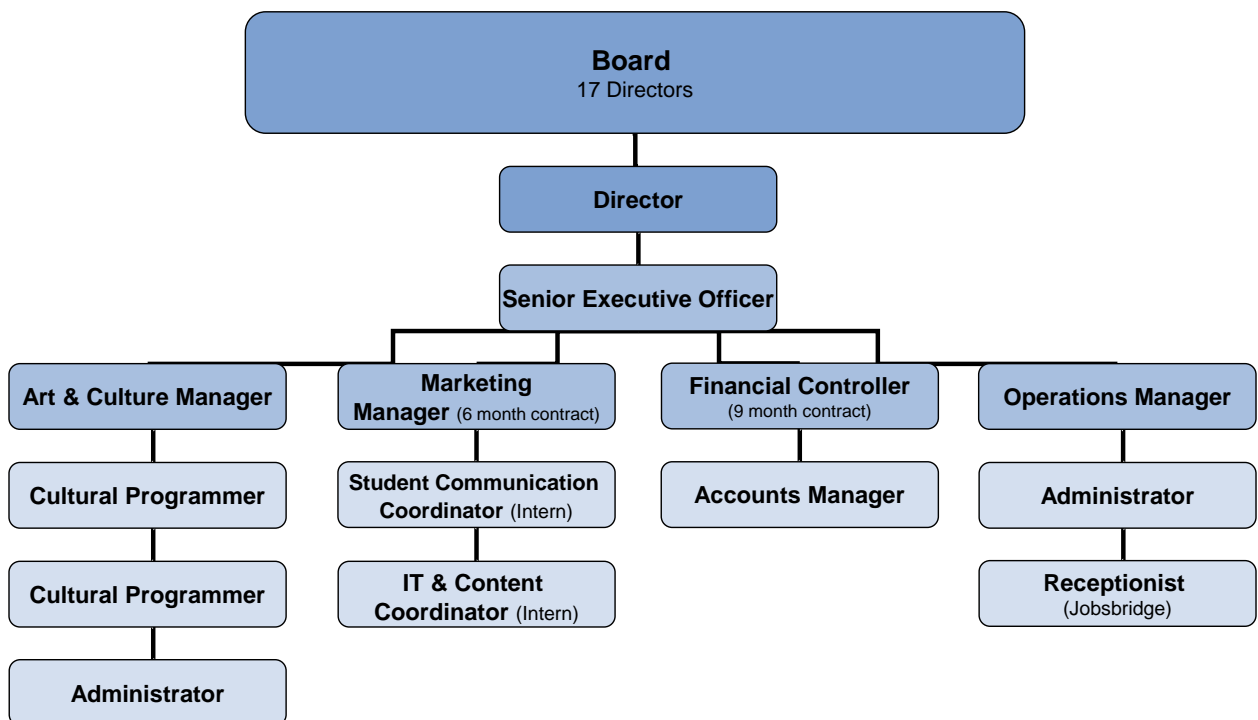
- The Board had agreed procedures to monitor and manage conflicts of interest (including as a standing item at each meeting of the Board) and for dealing with confidential disclosures.

On this basis, it may be concluded that the Board had sufficient procedures and structures in place to guide its operations in a way that is in line with best practice within the public sector.

2.3. Organisation Structure and Staff Costs

Chart 2.1 sets out the organisational structure for the period. Although the company did not have any employees in the period, the company was operated by a team of 14 staff, the majority of whom were on secondment from Limerick City and County Council. The costs of the secondments were borne by the Council as part of its support for the City of Culture year. The Council also engaged and funded two short-term contract positions, two internships and a jobsbridge placement for the initiative. The Director was seconded from Limerick Institute of Technology, which, with the Council, jointly bore the costs of the secondment over the period.

Chart 2.1 Organisation Structure: Limerick National City of Culture Ltd.



In addition, private sector support in the form of a corporate communications expert working part-time on the initiative also contributed to the operation of the year.

In lieu of dedicated staff, a number of short term contracts were entered into for specific projects as follows:

- Volunteer Ireland were contracted to source and coordinate volunteers for the initiative; and

- A number of individuals with specific cultural management expertise were engaged to coordinate and oversee the delivery of specific events, particularly on the international programme.

As Limerick was the first city in the jurisdiction to enjoy the City of Culture designation there are no direct comparators. As such, it is necessary to examine the staff structures of similar initiatives elsewhere. Derry/Londonderry held the inaugural UK City of Culture designation in 2013 and saw its programme of events delivered a staff of 18 full-time employees⁶ within its Culture Company as well as additional support being provided by staff in the then Derry City Council. This compares favourably with the Limerick company's total staff of 14, albeit augmented by a number of short-term contracts and private sector supports. It should also be noted that two of the positions in the Limerick company were only in place for six (Marketing) and nine (Financial Controller) months respectively with a further three positions being internship/jobsbridge positions. Hull is the next UK city to be designated as a national city of culture (2017) and has in place a team of 17⁷ to deliver on the programme. Again, the staff cohort for Limerick compares favourably with this figure. Data available⁸ in the *ex post* evaluations of EU Capitals of Culture (2011-2014) indicate that a much higher staff cohort is the norm with Riga 2014 requiring a team of 33 individuals, Marseille-Provence 2013 had a core staff of 74 for preparatory years rising to 174 by June of the title year, and 41 staff to deliver the title year in Turku 2011.

The organisation structure set out in chart 2.1 was also compared with the grade distribution in the civil service to assess the balance, or otherwise, between management and operational grades in the company. Table 2.2 provides details of that comparison. Although the small number of staff working at the company has a distortionary effect on the percentage breakdown at the higher grades, at more junior grades (AO/HEO equivalents and below), the proportional breakdown is broadly in line with the civil service more generally. Where divergence occurs, it relates to the company having more AO/HEO equivalents and fewer EO/SO/CO equivalents. This, however, may be explained by the fact that two of the four staff at AO/HEO equivalent level were undertaking the financial control and marketing functions. Both of these functions are considered to be essential for the delivery of the programme and were not duplicated elsewhere in the organisation.

⁶ <http://www.cityofculture2013.com/background/culture-company-2013/>

⁷ <http://hull2017.co.uk/the-team>

⁸ The information on staff numbers was not provided for all cities in the four year period, with a single figure only available for the three cities cited in the paragraph.

Table 2.2 Grade Distribution – Limerick & Civil Service

Civil Service & Local Authority Grades	Civil Service		Limerick National City of Culture Ltd.	
	2014		2014	
Secretary Generals & Assistant Secretaries	264	0.92%	0	0.00%
Principal Officers/Director of Service	1189	4.13%	1	7.14%
Assistant Principals/Senior Executive Officer	3424	11.88%	1	7.14%
AO/HEO/Grade 7	5769	20.02%	4	28.57%
EO/SO/CO/Grades 4, 5 and Clerical Officer	18169	63.05%	8	57.14%
Total	28815	100.00%	14	100.00%

At management grades (PO and AP equivalents), the number of staff per management grade relative to the civil service average was examined. On average, a PO in the civil service has oversight of 24 staff, relative to the 13 staff overseen by the director of the company, while, on average, an AP has oversight of 8 staff. This seems to suggest that the company is over-supplied at senior grades, however, this does not take into account the fact that, across the civil service, team sizes vary widely depending on the function of the team e.g. programme versus policy delivery and the requirement for the initiative to be led by a well-known, senior figure from the arts community.

In terms of the cost of staff for the company, as mentioned previously, this was borne by Limerick City and County Council⁹ and, in relation to the Director's salary, jointly with Limerick Institute of Technology. Funding for staff at the company was €840,062 in 2014, 1.8% lower than the budgeted amount of €855,320, approved by the Board in January 2014. Given the skills mix of the organisation (set out in chart 2.1) involving arts and culture management, marketing, financial control and operations, it is considered that comparison may be made with the Arts Council which requires broadly similar skillsets in its organisation. On this basis, the average staff costs in both organisations (for the year 2014) were compared. In Limerick the cost to the Council was, on average, €60,000 per staff member¹⁰ which compares well with an average cost of €64,000 per staff member in the Arts Council.

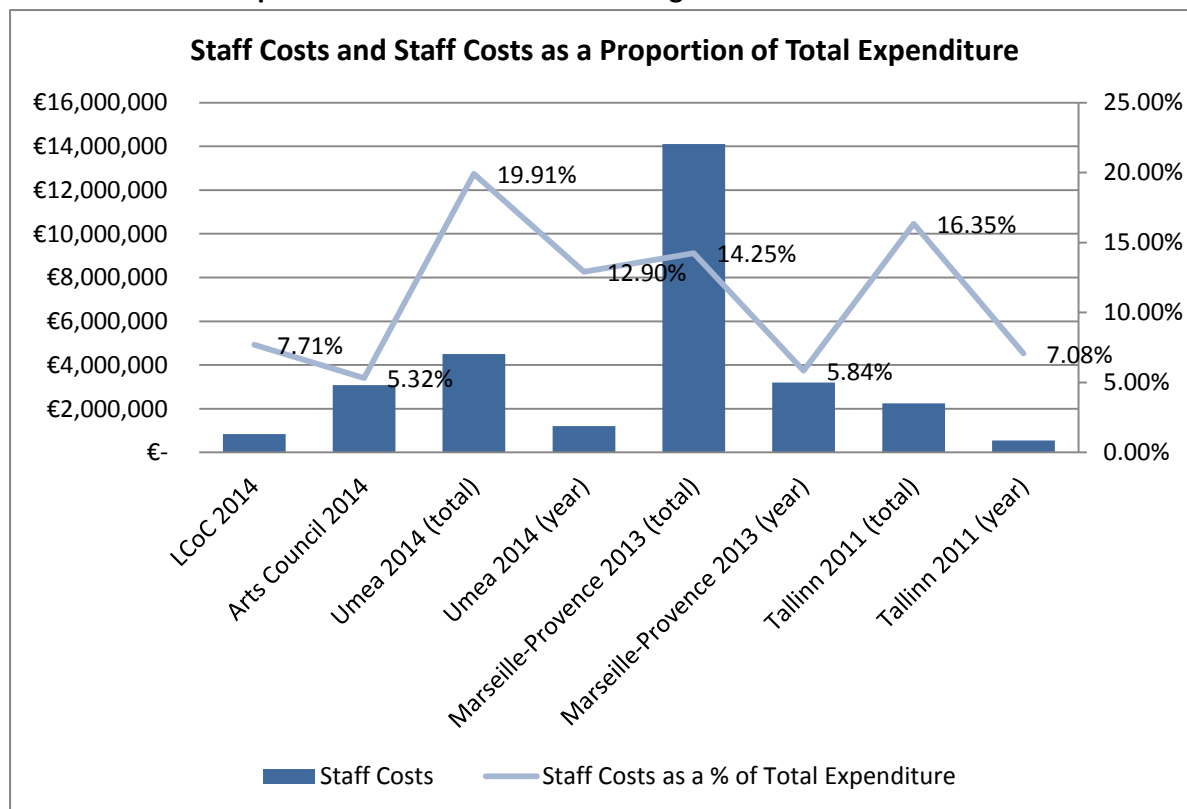
It is also useful to examine the relative cost of staffing for the city of culture year with similar events and organisations, albeit on a percentage basis. The Arts Council has been used previously as a comparator given the similarities between the skills mix required for the city of culture year and for the delivery of the Arts Council's annual programme, as have the national Cities of Culture in the UK (Hull and Derry/Londonderry). It should be noted that information is only available on the estimated costs for the national Cities of Culture and no breakdown is provided for staff costs alone making direct comparison with these initiatives impossible. To address this, and consistent with the

⁹ €9,000 of total staff costs of €840,062 (1.07%) was borne by the Limerick City of Culture 2014 Company.

¹⁰ It should be noted that staff costs are an amalgam of salaries, employers PSRI, pension contributions and other costs and should not be taken as salary costs.

methodology for the evaluation, where available, staff costs for a number of EU Capitals of Culture, where information on staff costs was provided, were also used as comparators. Chart 2.2 provides details of this comparison.

Chart 2.2 Comparisons of Staff Costs & Percentage Staff Costs



The data show that the absolute staff costs of the Limerick City of Culture year of €840,062 were relatively modest when compared to the total staff costs used in all three capitals of culture cities: Tallinn (€2.245m), Umea (€4.5m), and Marseille-Provence (€14.1m). This situation changes somewhat when only the staff costs for the title year are considered, although Limerick continues to perform well with the second lowest staff costs. Per title year Tallinn incurred the least staff costs at €541,000. Although this finding is positive in itself, it may further reflect the fact that the costs presented for Limerick represent the full staff costs for the initiative, including the costs for both planning and delivery elements.

The chart also provides information on staff costs as a percentage of total expenditure. Again, when examining the costs as they relate to the title year, Limerick appears to have higher staff costs at 7.71% of total expenditure than for Tallinn and Marseille-Provence, although Tallinn is close at 7.08%. However, this trend is reversed when the total staff costs for the preparation and delivery of the title year are taken into account, which Limerick enjoying the lowest percentage in this case. The possible reason for this is suggested in the previous paragraph. Also, the overall budget for Marseille-Provence is an outlier in terms of comparator events. That said, the percentage staff costs

for Limerick are higher than for the Arts Council (5.32%) which was found in a recent study¹¹ to have performed well in ensuring that the staff costs remain low relative to total expenditure. This finding may be reflective, in part, of the fact that Limerick as a company operating for only one year does not benefit from the economies which are derived from the pre-existence of policies and systems for the administration of the organisation, as would be the case in the Arts Council.

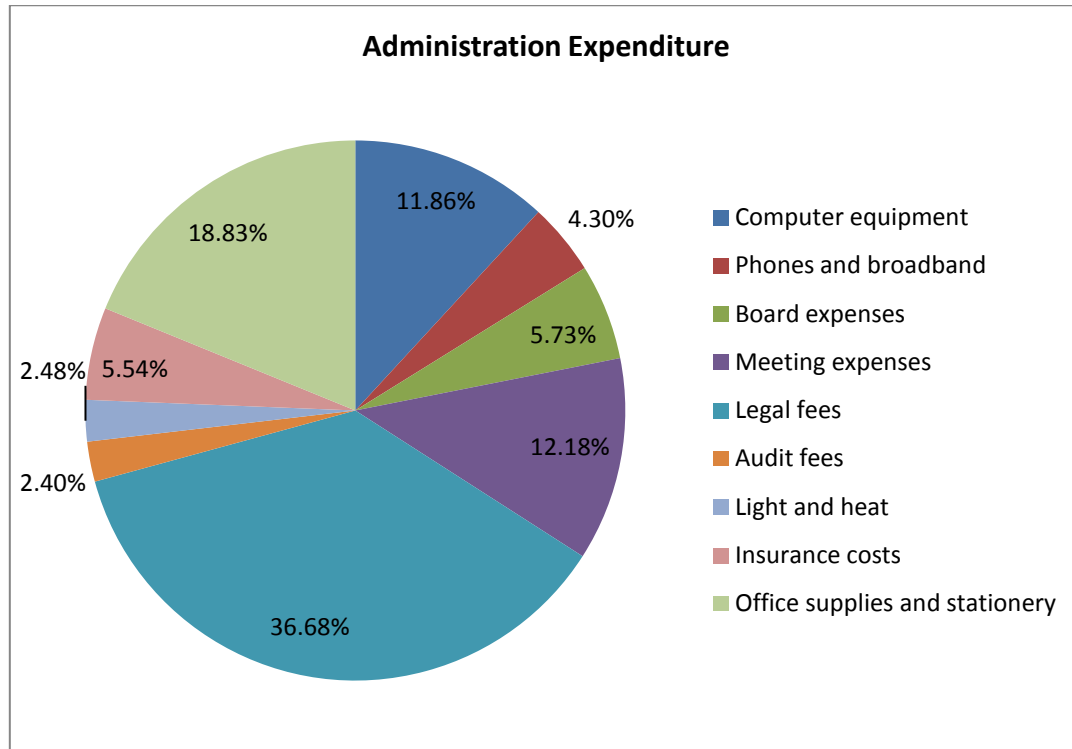
On this basis, it may be concluded that the costs for the Limerick City of Culture year compare favourably with those incurred in the planning and delivery of EU Capitals of Culture years, but that, in an Irish context, they are not as competitive as those of the Arts Council. Although there may be mitigating factors for this latter point, every effort should be taken by future title holders to ensure that staff costs are maintained at a level low enough to avoid any negative impact on programme funding.

2.4. Administration Costs

Over the course of 2014, the company spent €243,660 on its non-pay administration, broken down in the following chart. The highest areas of expenditure were for legal fees (€89,383), office supplies and stationery (€45,875) and meeting expenses (€29,683) which account for over two thirds of the total expenditure. The legal fees are considered to be high, especially when compared with those of the Arts Council for the same year (€67,000), however, this higher cost is associated with the additional legal advice required for the establishment of the company, changes to the constitution of the board and management structures in early 2014, preparation of contracts under the international programme and the preparation of standard contracts for grant programmes. While on the face of it, the costs set out for office supplies and stationery also appear high, however, this expenditure also includes a range of marketing related activities including the design of the logo, letterhead etc. and the procurement of promotional materials for the title year. In terms of meeting expenses, it is noted that board, steering group and pillar group meetings were generally held at the company's headquarters at Culture House, 2 Pery Square, to minimise meeting costs. It is also noted that attendees did not claim travel and subsistence for attendances. That said, it is considered that the costs for meeting expenses, although within the budget set for them, are high relative to the overall administration costs. For future City of Culture years, efforts should be taken to minimise such expenses, including through the use of public sector facilities to minimise room hire costs, no unnecessary catering, tendering for lowest price catering etc.

¹¹ <http://www.ahg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2015/09/value-for-money-and-policy-review-of-the-arts-council.pdf>

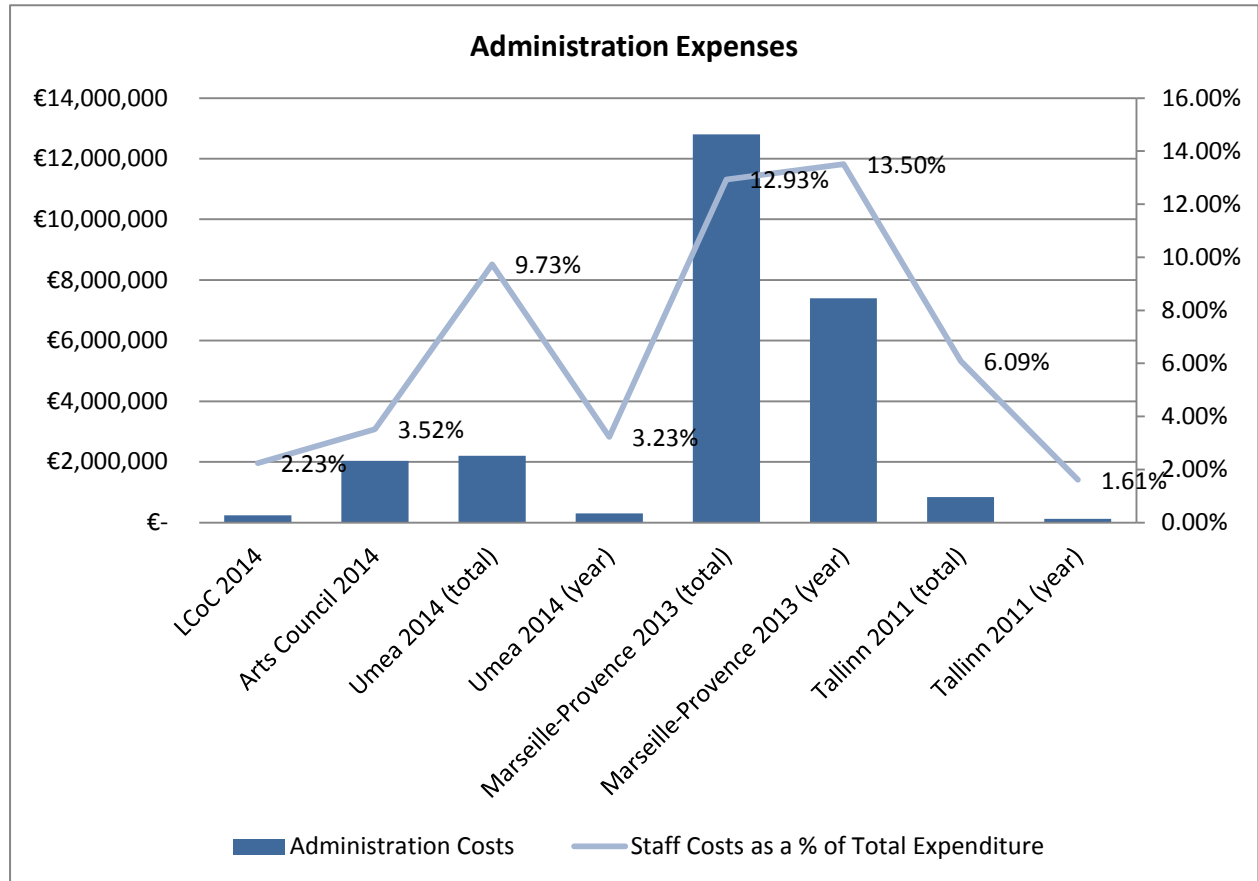
Chart 2.3 Administration Expenditure (percentage)



Overall, the total expenditure on non-pay administration costs accounted for just 2.23% of total expenditure for the Limerick City of Culture year, although the year end figure is 9.59% higher than the estimated expenditure from January 2014. That said, it is clear that the total non-pay administration costs incurred compare favourably with other organisations and initiative. In particular the figure for Limerick is significantly lower than for the Arts Council at 3.52%, which, as mentioned previously was found to be efficient at maintaining its non-pay administration costs at low levels relative to programme spend.

Chart 2.4 provides more detail on the comparisons between administration expenses in Limerick and for other Capitals of Culture. It should be noted that Tallinn (2011), Marseille-Provence (2013) and Umea (2014) are again used in the comparison. This is due to the comprehensive nature of the figures provided for these cities, relative to other title years, as reported in the annual reports for the European Commission.

Chart 2.4 Non-pay Administration Expenses - Comparison



Limerick also performs significantly better than the three Capitals of Culture examined when the total administration expenditure, rather than just the title year, is taken into consideration. On a title year only basis, Limerick performs better than Umea and Marseille-Provence, but is slightly higher than Tallinn at 1.61% of total expenditure. However, as with the staff costs, this may reflect the fact that Limerick bore the vast majority of its administration costs during the title year, whereas these were split over a number of years for the Capitals of Culture.

While this demonstrates an efficient operation of the City of Culture year by the Limerick company, it should be noted that Limerick also incurred project operation costs of €745,203 which might be considered part of the overall administration expenditure for the year. Project operations involved consultancy and programme fees, supports for the international programme, on-site visits and other programme support activities. When these are taken into account, the total administration expenditure rises to €988,863 or 9.07% of total expenditure. Although higher, it is still within the range of administration expenditure incurred by Umea (to deliver its full programme) and is slightly behind Marseille-Provence at 12.93%.

On this basis, it may be concluded that the Limerick company has performed efficiently in managing its administration expenditure, particularly when only the non-pay administration costs are taken into account. When other costs relating to the operation of projects are taken into account, these costs rise significantly, and compare less favourably to those of the Arts Council while still remaining within the range of the Capitals of Culture examined. For future City of Culture designations, every effort should be taken to maintain non-pay administration costs as low as possible so as to maximise

funding for programming and other title-year activities. In addition, a standard categorisation of costs should be agreed between the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the title holder to ensure clarity on costs for evaluation purposes.

Chapter 3: Income & Expenditure

3.1. Income & Expenditure Overview

In line with the methodology set out in chapter 1, and as recommended by the European Capitals of Culture Policy Group, this section examines the income and expenditure for the Limerick City of Culture year and compares it with the initial estimates for both. Table 3.1 sets out the income and expenditure which was submitted to the Department in July 2013 (following its approval by the Board the previous month) and the actual expenditure incurred for the title year. It also notes the percentage difference between the two figures. It should be noted that the June 2013 budget was not the only budget approved by the board, and a subsequent budget approved in January 2014 contained more detailed information on expenditure estimates which are of relevance in section 3.3 of this chapter. The June budget is used here as it was the budget that was formally submitted to the Department. The table shows that the actual income and expenditure was 4.37% less than originally estimated. The detail of the differences between estimated and actual income and expenditure is discussed in the following sections.

Table 3.1 Limerick City of Culture – budgeted and actual income and expenditure

Budget for Limerick City of Culture	Budget approved by Board June 2013	Actual Income/Expenditure	% Difference
Income			
Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	€ 6,000,000	€ 7,500,000	25.00%
Donations / Sponsorship by fundraising	€ 4,000,000	€ 1,230,791	-69.23%
Local Authority including funding for staff	€ 1,400,000	€ 1,010,839	-27.80%
Local Authority regeneration funding		€ 410,000	
Events receipts/box office	€ -	€ 750,677	N/A
Total Income	€ 11,400,000	€ 10,902,307	-4.37%
Expenditure			
Indigenous programming/Commissioning/Legacy	€ 7,000,000	€ 4,002,567	-42.82%
Flagship/International events	€ 3,000,000	€ 4,002,587	33.42%
Venue costs & project operations		€ 1,409,940	N/A
Marketing	€ 800,000	€ 403,491	-49.56%
Administration including staff costs	€ 600,000	€ 1,083,722	80.62%
Total Expenditure	€ 11,400,000	€ 10,902,307	-4.37%

3.2. Estimated Versus Actual Income & Expenditure

From table 3.1, it is clear that there is a relatively small variation of 4.37% between the original income estimates and the actual income received, which in turn influenced the funding available for the cultural programme. Although disappointing, this is not an uncommon feature of such initiatives and has been noted in *ex post* evaluations of a number of the EU Capitals of Culture (2011 to 2014)

namely Marseille-Provence, Maribor and Tallinn. It is considered that this situation arose in Limerick due to the relatively short time-frame between the establishment of the oversight structures to deliver the title year and the year itself and the reorganisation of the delivery structures in early 2014. The following section examines the detail behind this overall variation examining each category of income and expenditure.

The most significant divergence between estimated and actual income is the 69% underestimation of the income from donations and sponsorship from the June 2013 estimate. This is explained in large part by the inability to attract a title sponsor for the year, something which is acknowledged in the budget estimate of just €390,000 for donations/sponsorship approved by the Board in January 2014. There are a number of mitigating factors for the difficulties in encouraging sponsorship including the relatively tight timeframes involved for the preparations for the year and the possible impact of negative media coverage which may have made the initiative unattractive for private sponsorship. To address this deficit the company engaged a marketing company with a specific remit to generate private sector sponsorship either for the title year, for the culture factory or for specific events. Over the course of the year, the company secured sponsorship from 25 private and philanthropic funders worth €1.23 million. It also secured in-kind sponsorship including advertising, site specific branding, marketing and promotion, accommodation, catering, transport and project support from a range of private and public sector bodies. The in-kind sponsorship was valued at €0.72 million.

In addition, it is noted that additional funding of €1.5 million from the Department was secured to meet the deficit in the programme funding. Limerick City and County Council also secured additional funding of €410,000 from its regeneration programme, leading to a very slight increase on its total contribution of 1.49% over the budgeted amount for the local authority's contribution of €1.4 million. While some sponsorship was secured from the public sector, particularly in terms of in-kind sponsorship from Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland, the potential for synergies between the investment programmes of national tourism and enterprise agencies as well as Government supported community development initiatives should have been explored more fully prior to the commencement of the year. For future City of Culture designations, consideration should be given to the whole range of public funding supports to ensure a balanced and sustainable income profile for the year. This is also borne out in the findings of the *Ex-Post Evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture (2014)* which found that Umea 2014 had effectively maximised its funding from a broad range of EU funding sources.

It is also noted that there is no figure provided in the original budget for event receipts and box office revenue. This was due to the absence of an agreed programme of events at that stage in the planning process. Over the course of the year, the company generated receipts of €0.75 million from a number of the headline events on the international programme: Riverdance, Furerza Bruta! and No Fit State, with moderate receipts from other events. These are discussed further in section 3.3.3 of this chapter.

Table 3.1 also presents a comparison between the June 2013 expenditure estimate and the actual expenditure. There are significant differences between the two, particularly in relation to the indigenous programming estimate, incorporating the *'Made in Limerick'*, Commissioning and Legacy

programme strands, which is some €3 million or 42.8% less than originally estimated. This may be explained in part by a higher expectation in June 2013 of the quantity of original work which would be commissioned, relative to the actual amount which was deliverable in terms of the quality required and the requirement to deliver the project within a tight timeframe. For example, of the 320 applications for funding under the *'Made in Limerick'* programme strand, only 109 (34%) were deemed suitable for support after assessment.

There are also differences in the estimated costs of the international programming which was 33.4% higher than expected and in the overall estimate for the cost of administration (80.6%). As with the estimates for box office receipts, these discrepancies may be explained by the absence of a final programme in June 2013. In addition, the table shows additional expenditure items for venue and project operations costs which were not included in the June 2013 estimate, again, in the absence of a clear programme for the title year.

Given the lack of clarity on the structure of the programme in June 2013, it is considered that a better comparison by which to assess the performance of the company in terms of its expenditure is presented in table 3.2. The table outlines a more comprehensive estimate of expenditure approved by the Board in January 2014 based on the proposed title year programme at that date. The table then compares these figures against the actual expenditure incurred. On first review, there is evidence that, with greater clarity on the programme for the year, the expenditure estimates were much more robust and are, consequently, much closer to the actual expenditure incurred with only a 1% increase over the estimate noted. This indicates that across the broad spectrum of the expenditure, the company managed expenditure efficiently against the agreed budget.

Looking at the detail of the expenditure, the three indigenous programming strands (*'Made in Limerick'*, Commissioning and Legacy) were under budget by 7.93%. Marketing was also under budget by almost 29% which may be explained by the inclusion of some marketing costs (logo development, promotional materials etc.) in the administration budget and by the receipt of in-kind supports including advertising, branding etc. from other supports (discussed further in section 3.3.2).

Table 3.2 also identifies where expenditure was over-budget. The most minor overrun was in administration expenditure which was slightly over-budget (0.56%). This was analysed in Chapter 2. International programming was some 12% over-budget which is due to greater than expected costs for the Royal de Luxe and other additional staging costs across the programme. The venue costs and project operation costs were also above budget (by 15.25%). This relates primarily to increased costs in relation to the preparation of the Culture Factory (the flagship venue for the title year) and consultancy and programme fees. The additional costs in relation to the Culture Factory were due to unforeseen works being necessary to ensure the venue was fit for use by the public. The increase of €120,000 in the estimated amount of consultancy and programme fees is ascribed to the need for specialist skills identified in early 2014 following the change in management and board constitution.

Table 3.2 Expenditure Estimate (January 2014) and Actual Expenditure

Budget for Limerick City of Culture	Budget approved by Board January 2014	Actual Expenditure	% Difference
Expenditure			
Indigenous programming/Commissioning/Legacy	€ 4,347,410	€ 4,002,567	-7.93%
Flagship/International events	€ 3,574,499	€ 4,002,587	11.98%
Venue costs & project operations	€ 1,223,393	€ 1,409,940	15.25%
Marketing	€ 567,592	€ 403,491	-28.91%
Administration including staff costs	€ 1,077,652	€ 1,083,722	0.56%
Total Expenditure	€ 10,790,546	€ 10,902,307	1.04%

3.3. Income

3.3.1. Public Sector Funding

Chart 3.1 presents a breakdown of the percentage income from the range of income sources the city of culture year. It is clear from the table that the majority of funding came from public sources, with 69% coming from the Department and 13% from Local Government, discussed in detail in this section. When compared with the experience of the EU Capitals of Culture initiative, this represents a higher than average proportion of funding coming from public sector sources. No direct public funding from sources other than the Department and Local Government was secured as part of the City of Culture initiative, although some in-kind supports were received from Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland, among others. It should be noted that the funding set out in chart 3.1 is in addition to the €1.7 million provided by the Arts Council to support the arts in Limerick city (an increase of 4% on the previous years' funding). However as the Arts Council funding was not specifically designated for City of Culture initiatives, it is not included in the breakdown.

Chart 3.1 Income break-down Limerick City of Culture year

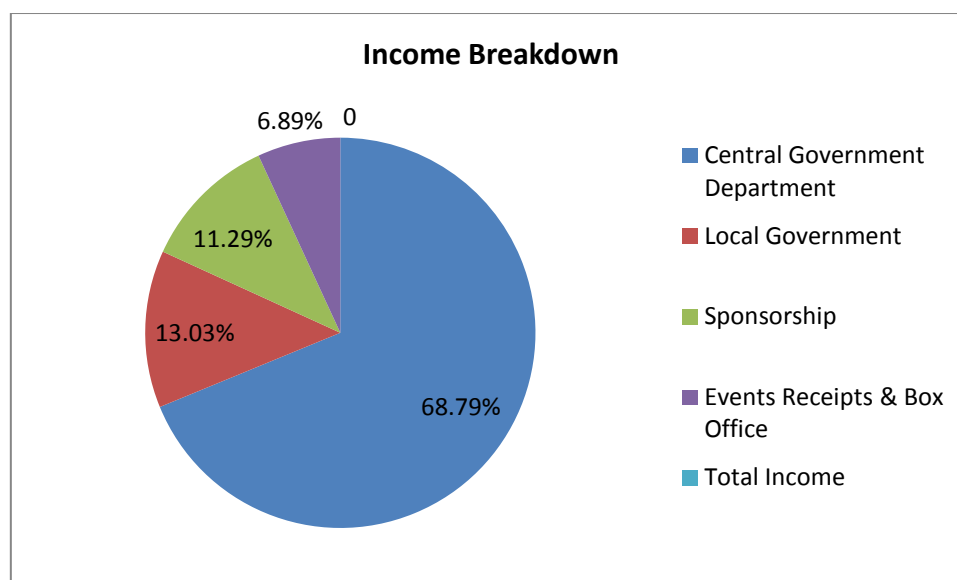


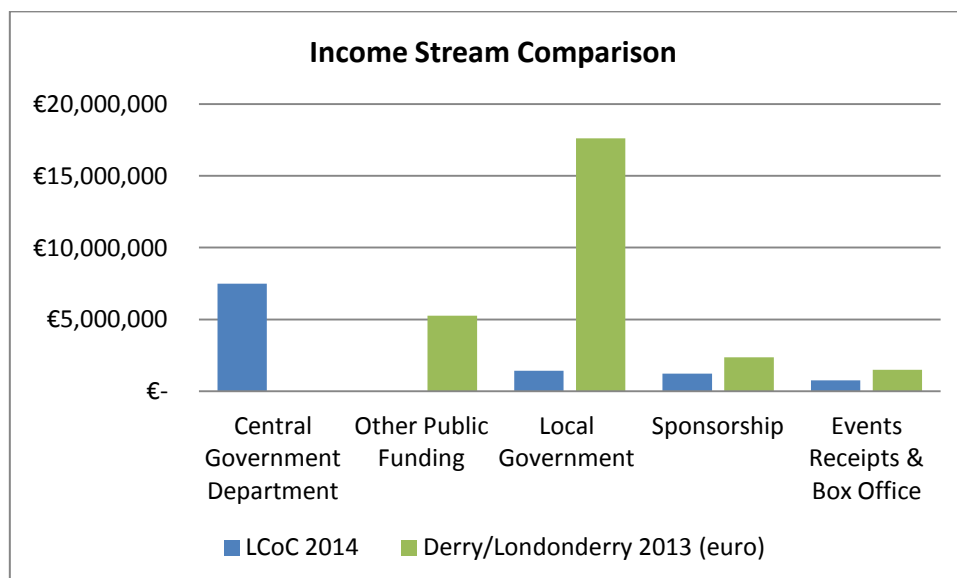
Table 3.3 sets out the percentage income from all public sector sources for the last four years of EU Capitals of Culture. The average contribution from public sector sources was 70%, 12% lower than for Limerick which saw 82% of its funding come from the public sector.

Table 3.3 Public Sector Funding as a Percentage of Total Income – EU Capitals of Culture 2011-2014

Income	Umea 2014	Riga 2014	Kosice 2013	Marseille-Provence 2013	Guimaraes 2012	Maribor 2012	Tallinn 2011	Turku 2011
Total percentage public sector income	67.32%	89.00%	38.72%	74.41%	46.26%	93.57%	83.48%	74.44%

It is also worth noting that the City of Culture initiative in the UK operates on the basis that no specific Government funding is provided to support the initiative, but rather the municipal or lead agency for the City of Culture designation leverages a broad range of public and private sources of income. Although the evaluation of the Derry/Londonderry year has not been completed, figures are available for the original bid which provide the breakdown of funding sources. Chart 3.2 sets out a comparison between the funding estimates for the Derry/Londonderry year as against the Limerick year. The chart is in euro, with the conversion completed using the central bank exchange rate averages for 2013¹².

Chart 3.2 Derry/Londonderry 2013 estimate & Limerick actual income



¹² <https://www.centralbank.ie/polstats/stats/exrates/Pages/default.aspx>

The greatest funding source for the Derry/Londonderry year was expected to be the Local Authority. This is consistent with the UK approach of devolving responsibility for securing public and private funding to the title year designate. For the Limerick year, it was the Department rather than the Local Authority which bore the majority of the costs (69%), with just 13% coming from the Local Authority and the balance from other sources. The UK initiative also includes a more expansive approach to securing public funding, and efforts to protect against weak areas of revenue generation, as highlighted in the following extract from the Derry/Londonderry bid document:

'A public sector long list was drawn up of potential funders. The list considered the type of funding and/or support each particular organisation could give the specific programming areas where they may participate and our estimate of how much each organisation may contribute based on research and exploratory conversations... An exercise was undertaken to match the public sector funding against the emerging revenue and capital programming proposals. This exercise let us identify areas of strength and weakness within our emerging funding package in areas where we had a surfeit of public funding and areas where more work was required.' (Page 45)

It is considered essential that future designations of the Irish National City of Culture should take a similar approach, exploring all other sources of funding – across the public and private sectors – as part of the preparatory work for the year. This should minimise the risk to the Department as the primary source of additional funding, should it become necessary.

Funding from the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht

The Limerick City of Culture (LCoC) was provided with a grant of €6 million in funding under Budget 2014. Drawdown of the funding was subject to conditions set out in the service level agreement (discussed in section 2.1). A drawdown schedule was agreed in advance on the basis of drawdown in arrears, with the exception of the *'Made in Limerick'* programme which could be claimed in advance, as sanctioned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

A number of limits were placed on the funding, as follows:

- that no more than 12.5% or €0.750 million, whichever is the lesser, be eligible for administrative cost funding. This was increased to €0.938 million on 23 December 2014;
- that a maximum of €2.26 million be provided for the *'Made in Limerick'* programme; and
- that a maximum of €0.891 million and €0.770 million of the total Exchequer grant be dedicated to Legacy and Commissioning strands respectively.

The grant funding from the Department was increased to €7.5 million, following requests from the Local Authority on behalf of the board. These requests for additional funding noted the increased cost of the City of Culture year due to additional events planned, budget increases particularly in relation to the international programme and the limited private sponsorship for the project relative to initial estimates. This represents an increase of 25% on the initial allocation announced in October 2013.

This additional funding was necessary to ensure that the cultural programme was fully funded for the year. To minimise the request for additional funding the company had taken a number of actions, as follows:

- The value of the cultural programme was reduced by 4.37%;
- A marketing company with expertise in private sector sponsorship was engaged to try and secure additional funding from that source; and
- The Local Authority secured funding from its regeneration programme (€410,000) as part of its contribution to the City of Culture initiative, leading to an increase of 1.49% over budget in its contribution.

Chart 3.1 highlights the dependence on funding from the Department. Undoubtedly, the additional funding for the programme was justified in terms of the expenditure incurred and the company demonstrated its efforts to both minimise the scale of the increased requirement and additional efforts to secure alternative funding. Of concern, however, is the exposure of the Department to bearing the majority of the funding deficit.

For comparative purposes, table 3.4 provides additional data on the break-down of funding across the EU Capitals of Culture over the period 2011 to 2014. For comparative purposes, it offers a breakdown of the percentage income from each of the main sources of funding. It should be noted that the high value of the incomes for a number of the Capitals of Culture is related to the inclusion of, often significant, infrastructural elements.

In considering the central Government funding element, it is noteworthy that the support received by Limerick of 69% (on a percentage basis) is considerably more than for the majority of the Capitals of Culture examined which averaged central Government income of 31.4%. Of the eight cities reviewed, Maribor 2012 is the closest with 53.57%. The *ex post* evaluation of the Maribor 2012 year found that there were a number of budgetary and delivery challenges for the Capital of Culture year which resulted in a significant reduction in the income estimates (from €57.42 million to €28.4 million). While the relative proportion of central government funding for the year was high, the original expectation was that it would represent a much smaller proportion of the overall funding (38% of the original estimate). Given this, and the approach taken in the UK National City of Culture, it seems appropriate that future designations in Ireland would see the Departmental contribution reduce, in line with the practice internationally.

Table 3.4 Income streams – EU Capitals of Culture 2011 to 2014

Income	Umea 2014	Riga 2014	Kosice 2013	Marseille-Provence 2013	Guimaraes 2012	Maribor 2012	Tallinn 2011	Turku 2011
Central Government	€ 15,100,000	€ 12,285,000	€ 17,400,000	€ 12,800,000	€ 10,450,000	€ 15,212,864	€ 4,488,000	€ 17,450,000
Regional & other public funding	€ 5,700,000		€ 6,900,000	€ 12,800,000	€ 4,873,000	€ 79,413		€ 3,089,000
Local Government	€ 9,900,000	€ 12,012,000	€ 15,000,000	€ 47,400,000	€ 4,000,000	€ 11,281,880	€ 7,572,000	€ 18,505,000
Sponsorship	€ 3,500,000	€ 546,000	€ 1,700,000	€ 14,900,000	€ 25,000	€ 987,485	€ 530,000	€ 3,035,000
Events Receipts & Box Office	€ 2,500,000	€ 819,000		€ 7,100,000	€ 480,000		€ 356,000	€ 4,643,000
EU & other funding	€ 8,900,000	€ 1,638,000	€ 60,500,000	€ 3,100,000	€ 21,946,000	€ 838,000	€ 1,500,000	€ 5,725,000
Total Income	€ 45,600,000	€ 27,300,000	€101,500,000	€ 98,100,000	€ 41,774,000	€ 28,399,642	€ 14,446,000	€ 52,447,000
Central Government Income as a % of Total Income	33.11%	45.00%	17.14%	13.05%	25.02%	53.57%	31.07%	33.27%
Regional & other public funding as a % of Total income	12.50%	0.00%	6.80%	13.05%	11.67%	0.28%	0.00%	5.89%
Local Government Income as a % of Total Income	21.71%	44.00%	14.78%	48.32%	9.58%	39.73%	52.42%	35.28%
Sponsorship as a % of Total Income	7.68%	2.00%	1.67%	15.19%	0.06%	3.48%	3.67%	5.79%
Events/Box Office as a % of Total Income	5.48%	3.00%	0.00%	7.24%	1.15%	0.00%	2.46%	8.85%

Funding from Local Government

Limerick City of Culture received support valued at €1,420,839 from the Local Authority or 13% of the total income, broken down as follows:

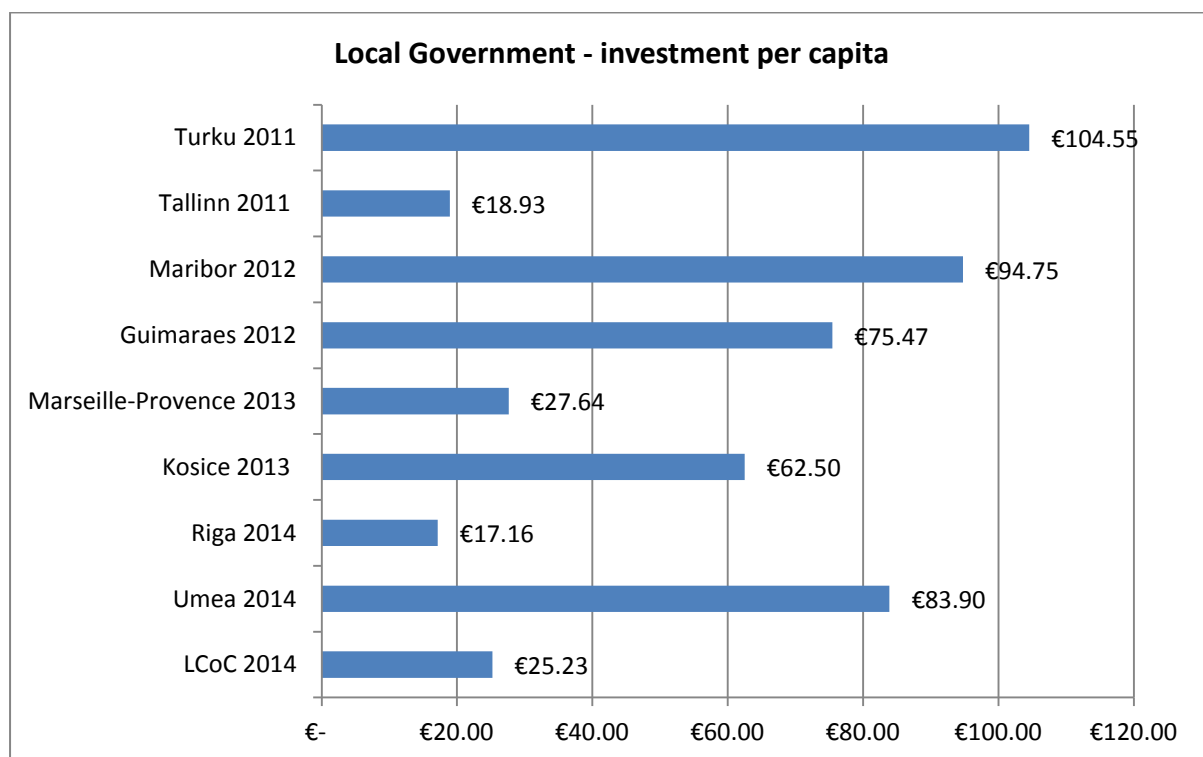
- Direct funding for the initiative - €179,777;
- Regeneration funding - €410,000; and
- Staff costs - €831,062¹³

This represents a 1.49% increase on the originally estimated contribution from the Local Authority of €1.4 million. However, the amount of local government funding as a proportion of the total funding represents a relatively small amount in Limerick, relative to the expected contribution from Local Government to the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture 2013 (chart 3.2) and the comparison with EU Capitals of Culture in table 3.4 (an average of 33.23% rising to almost 40% when regional and other sources of public funding are included). It should be noted that local governments in other jurisdictions have greater revenue generating capacity than in Ireland and as such, may have greater availability of funding for initiatives like the EU Capitals of Culture, although this has been somewhat addressed by the introduction of the Local Property Tax.

It is also worth examining the investment *per capita* by Limerick relative to the same investment across the EU Capitals of Culture programme, set out in chart 3.3. Limerick's per capita investment is €25.23, based on a population of 57,000 in the city, and as such, is located in the second quintile. As such, it performs better than some international comparators (Tallinn and Riga) and is close to the per capita expenditure for Marseille-Provence, although it is significantly behind the highest performing cities. As mentioned previously, the recent expansion in the capacity of local government in Ireland to generate its own resources i.e. through the local property tax may enhance the ability of local government to contribute to future City of Culture designations with a view to moving towards the higher performing cities in the fourth and fifth quintiles.

¹³ This represents the vast majority of staff costs borne by the company. Only €9,000 of staff costs were met from within the general budget of the company.

Chart 3.3 Local Government investment per capita (Limerick and EU Capitals of Culture)



Another point to note, in the case of the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture bid, it was clear that the initial income estimates were based on a baseline derived from the Local Authority funding which would have been spent anyway incorporating administration, programming and marketing expenditure. Such figures are not available in the case of Limerick, however, it would be a useful exercise for future City of Culture designations.

3.3.2. *Sponsorship*

As set out in section 3.1, the company received sponsorship income of €1,230,791 from 24 private and philanthropic organisations. This represented 11.29% of all income received to support the Limerick City of Culture year. It is worth noting that the figure for sponsorship significantly exceeded the previous year's total sponsorship for arts organisations supported by the Arts Council across all of Limerick County (€435,000).

Although the final figure for sponsorships was 69% less than the original estimate of €4 million (June 2013), the time available for securing sponsorship, the negative media reporting of the designation in late 2013 and early 2014, as well as the relatively small pool of potential donors with significant sponsorship resources in the area, all mitigated against reaching the estimated value. This is borne out by the decision to reduce the estimated income from sponsorship to €390,000 in the budget approved by the Board in January 2014.

Of the €1,230,791 in sponsorships received, three sponsors provided funded in excess of €100,000, and accounted together for 75.07% of all sponsorship received. There was one sponsorship award of between €50,000 and €100,000, with the remaining 20 sponsors all providing funding of €25,000 or less. As mentioned previously, the company engaged a marketing company to enhance its ability to secure sponsorship at a cost to the organisation of €55,664¹⁴. The relatively low number of large awards, relative to the high number of smaller awards, gives cause to consider whether the strategy pursued by the marketing company was optimal, with resources in the marketing company being directed to best effect towards potentially larger donors. For future National City of Culture designations, a sponsorship strategy should be required as part of the bid process with negotiations on sponsorship commencing at least a year in advance of the title year.

While the overall number and quantum of sponsorships received was disappointing for the Limerick City of Culture year, it was by no means a unique experience for such initiatives. Analysis of the EU Capitals of Culture (2011-2014) in table 3.4 show that, on a percentage basis, this level of sponsorship is significantly higher than the average for the cities examined which was 4.94%. In fact, of the cities examined, Limerick at 11.29% enjoyed the second highest level of sponsorship, just behind Marseille-Provence at 15.19%.

It is noteworthy that overestimating the likely level of sponsorship for a city or capital of culture initiative is also typical as shown in table 3.5. The table presents estimated and actual income from sponsorship for five EU Capitals of Culture and compares it with figures for Limerick. Information on estimates was not available for the other three Capitals of Culture reviewed elsewhere in this chapter.

Table 3.5 Estimates and Actual Income from Sponsorship

	LCoC 2014	Umea 2014	Kosice 2013	Maribor 2012	Tallinn 2011	Turku 2011
Estimated Sponsorship	€ 4,000,000	€ 5,500,000	€ 3,200,000	€ 6,500,000	€ 8,148,000	€ 6,000,000
Actual Sponsorship	€ 1,230,791	€ 3,500,000	€ 1,700,000	€ 987,485	€ 530,000	€ 3,035,000
% Difference	-69.23%	-36.36%	-46.88%	-84.81%	-93.50%	-49.42%

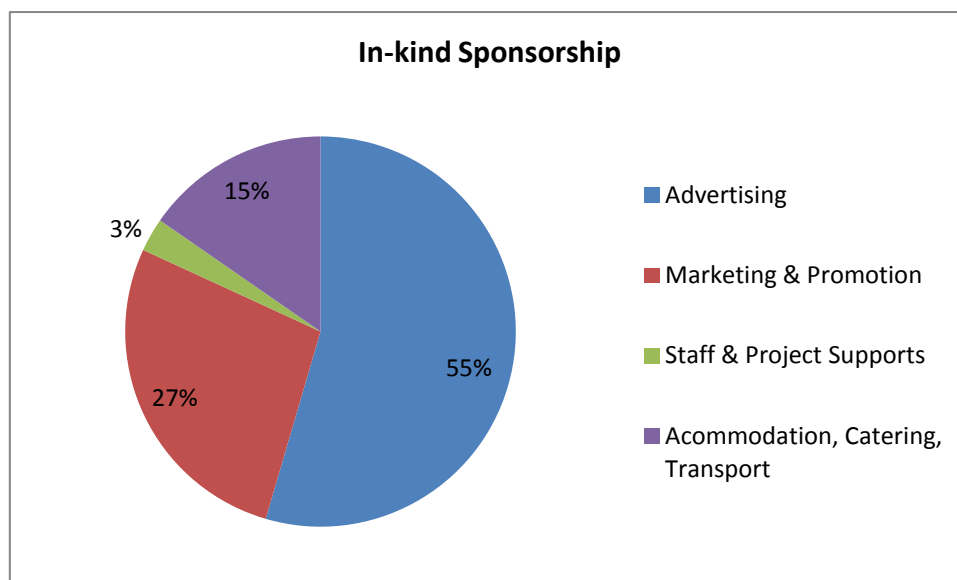
From the table, it is clear that all six cities significantly overestimated their likely income from sponsorships ranging from -36% in Umea to 93.5% in Tallinn. Limerick falls in the middle of the group at -69%.

One of the other methods used by the company to offset the income deficit from sponsorship was to seek in-kind sponsorships. Limerick estimates that it received €720,692 in in-kind supports from 13 sponsors over the year. The breakdown of supports received, across four broad categories is presented in chart 3.5. The greatest value received was in advertising supports, followed by marketing and promotional supports. Support was also received from a number of hotels, accommodation providers, car parks and caterers to support the hosting of events within the City.

¹⁴ This was made up of contract payments of €30,664 and a legal settlement of €25,000 in respect of a disputed performance bonus under the contract.

Although only 3% of the total in-kind sponsorship related to staff and project supports, it was considered to be one of the most valuable supports in terms of its impact on the overall project.

Chart 3.5 In-kind sponsorship – Limerick City of Culture



A number of the Capitals of Culture also provided information on in-kind supports which are consistent with the supports received in Limerick i.e. marketing supports, reduced accommodation rates, corporate supports etc. Maribor 2012 is noteworthy in that, in addition to these typical supports, the city also included a range of co-funded productions in its cultural programme for the year. This minimised its exposure to risks associated with rising costs or deficits in box-office and event receipts. While Limerick City of Culture advised that it had included co-funded productions in its programme, it was not possible to get a list of the projects involved.

3.3.3. *Event Receipts and Box Office*

Over the course of the title year, the company saw box office and other event-related receipts of €750,677 or 6.89% of total income. This does not account for the total revenue from box office and events receipts for the year, but only that which was received by the company and used to support the delivery of the title year. As discussed previously, no estimate for event and box office receipts was included in the June 2013 budget. The majority of this income came from the box office receipts of just three events – Riverdance, Fuerza Bruta! and No Fit State, all included in the international programming strand of the cultural programme. Both Riverdance and Fuerza Bruta! were sold out, with additional shows added in both cases.

Table 3.6 presents information on the cost of the events, the box office receipts, audience numbers and an average box office per audience member. It also compares this latter figure with a proxy national average, based on Theatre Forum’s annual Audiences for the Performing Arts in Ireland report for 2014. The report presents a broad range of data derived from the box offices of 49 venues across the country.

Table 3.6 Limerick City of Culture – Event costs and box office receipts

Box Office & Event Receipts	Event Cost	Box office	Cost difference	Audience	Box office per person
Riverdance	€ 403,499	€ 410,937	€ 7,438	16,982	€ 24.20
Fuerza Bruta!	€ 950,133	€ 281,845	-€ 668,288	14,000	€ 20.13
No Fit State	€ 321,425	€ 49,000	-€ 272,425	5,000	€ 9.80
Other receipts		€ 8,895			
Total Event Receipts		€ 750,677			
<i>National Average 2014</i>		<i>€ 27,800,000</i>		<i>1,700,000</i>	<i>€ 16.35</i>

From the table, it may be concluded that the average box office receipt per audience member for the two sold out shows (Riverdance and Fuerza Bruta!) was significantly higher than the national average, while No Fit State lagged behind the average by some degree. This latter finding may be indicative of lower ticket sales for the event prompting promotional and complimentary ticket offerings to generate interest in the event.

Chart 3.6 compares Limerick’s performance with that of a number of EU Capitals of Culture in terms of event and box office receipts (where such information was provided as part of the *ex post* Capital of Culture evaluations). As with the analysis of sponsorship receipts, it is clear that Limerick has performed well in terms of generating event receipts, with the third highest event receipts as a percentage of total income behind Turku and Marseille-Provence. Even in terms of absolute receipts, which given the ambitious scale of many of the Capital of Culture initiatives, Limerick performs well with receipts greater than Guimaraes and Tallinn and broadly in line with those generated by Riga.

Chart 3.6 International Comparisons – Event and Box Office Receipts

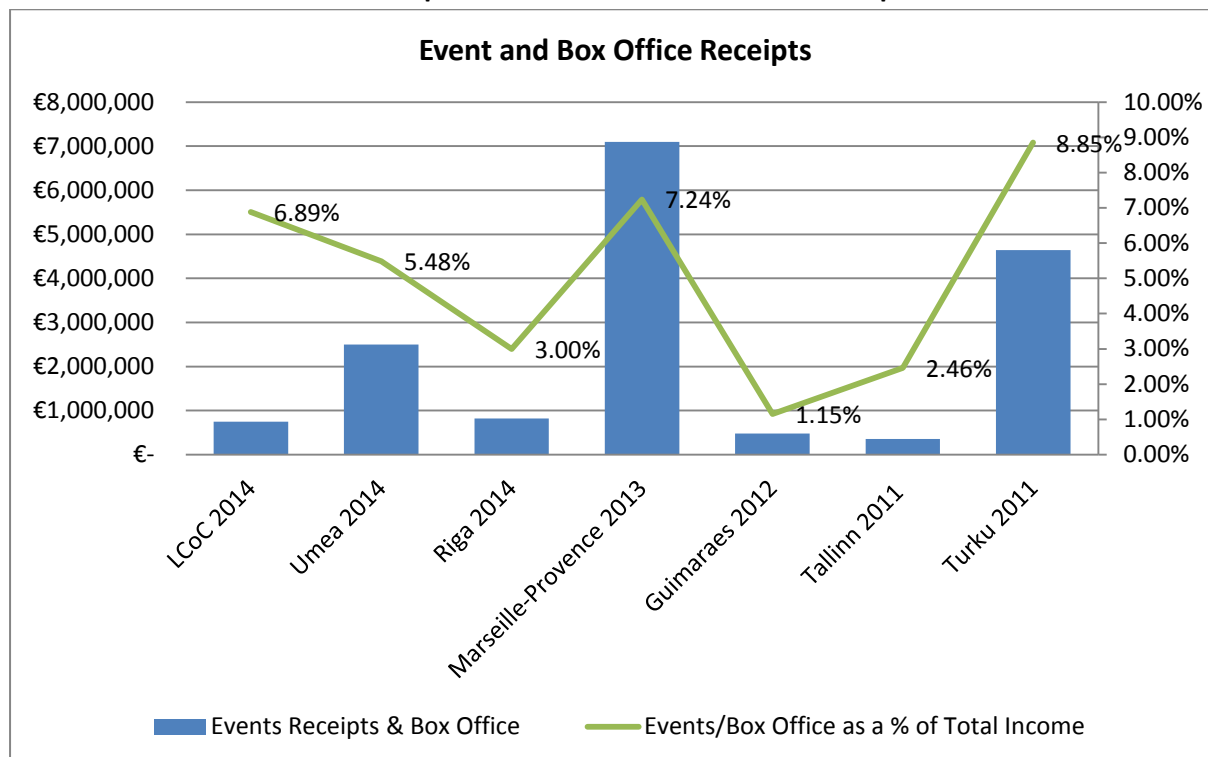


Table 3.6 also examines the income generated by the three flagship events relative to the cost of their production. In the case of Riverdance, a small profit of €7,438 was shown, however the other two events saw significant losses relative to the box office receipts. Fuerza Bruta!, in particular, saw its costs rise significantly due to specific and unforeseen production costs that arose at the venue. It should be noted, however, that the primary objective of these flagship international events was not to generate income but rather to offer international highlights as part of the cultural programme which would not be normally be provided on a commercial basis. In addition, it would be incorrect to over-emphasise the importance of offsetting costs in these three cases, given that the balance of the events in the international programming strand were provided free of charge. However, if a conclusion were to be reached on this point, it is to take into consideration the revenue-generating potential of high-cost programming as part of the strategy development process with a view to minimising their impact on the overall cultural programme funding.

In terms of additional efforts which could have been taken to maximise the revenue from the international programming strand, it is noted that the majority of other events in the International programme were not suitable for ticket sales e.g. Royal de Luxe and Proms in the Park. As such, it is considered that the revenue generated was in line with what the programme, as constructed, could have reasonably been expected to generate. A minor caveat is noted in relation to *No Fit State* whereby the reasons for its lower ticket sales were not available for this evaluation.

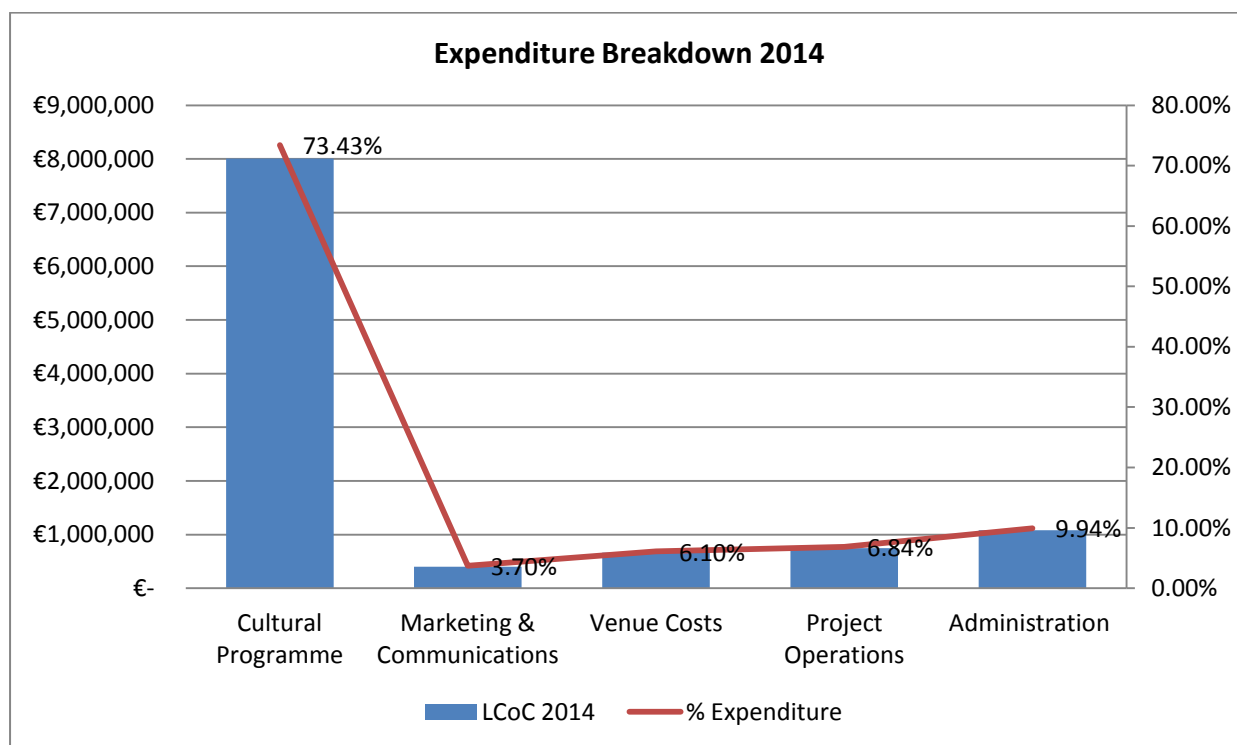
3.4. Expenditure

This section examines the expenditure of €10.9 million on the Limerick City of Culture year (set out in table 3.1). Chart 3.7 provides the percentage breakdown between the main categories of

expenditure; cultural programme, marketing, venue costs, project operations and administration. Expenditure on the cultural programme was divided into four separate strands, as follows:

- International Programme – the objective of the international programme was to bring international acts and events to both Limerick and Ireland, broadening the Irish artistic and cultural experience;
- ‘Made in Limerick’ – this programme of small grants was established with the stated objective of developing and exploring latent talent in the local communities and to ensure involvement and personal interest of the citizens of Limerick in the world of culture in its broadest definition;
- Commissioning – this strand offered opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners to create and present new and/or innovative works; and
- Legacy – this final strand set as its objective the search for events and projects which, with the initial funding provided by the City of Culture year, would, over time, have a lasting impact on the City and Region.

Chart 3.7 Expenditure break-down Limerick City of Culture year

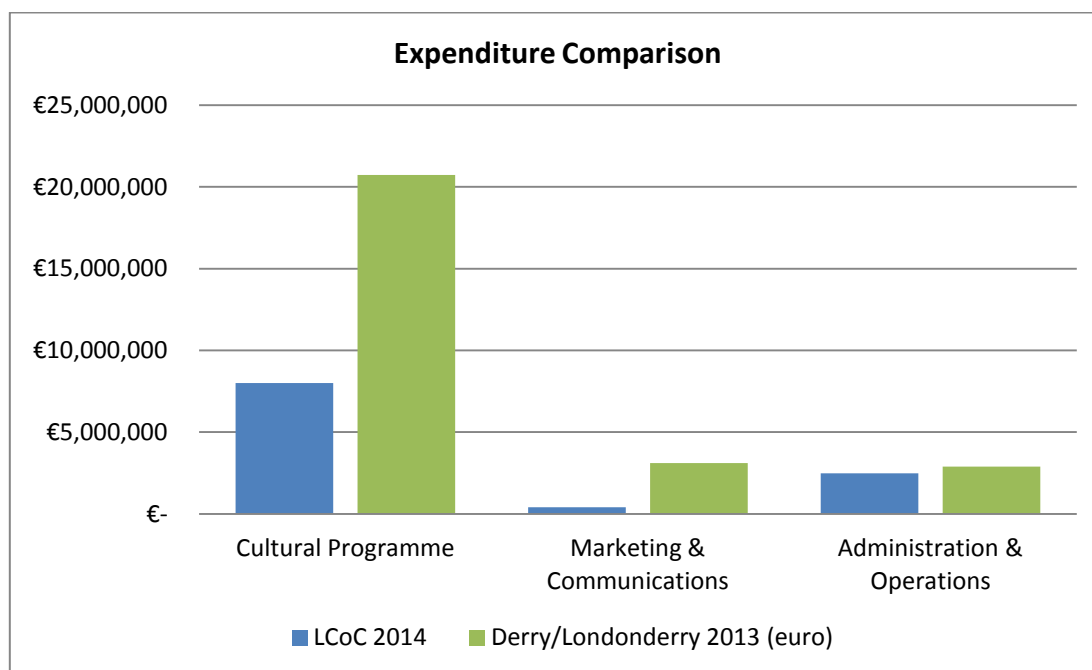


As can be seen from the chart, the majority of the expenditure, some 73.43%, for the Limerick City of Culture year went on the cultural programme. This compares favourably with the average expenditure on cultural programming under the EU Capitals of Culture (64.82%), however it is a little behind the estimated percentage expenditure on cultural programming for the Derry/Londonderry City at 77.56%. It should be noted, however, that this latter figure is based on an estimate of the likely expenditure rather than actual expenditure as reported by the EU Capitals of Culture. From the EU Capitals of Culture experience, information on estimated versus actual expenditure on the

cultural programme was available for six of the eight capitals. Of these, five cities over-estimated the value of the cultural programme ranging from -3.71% (Kosice) to -71.68% (Tallinn).

In terms of the balance of the expenditure, chart 3.8 provides a comparison between Limerick and Derry/Londonderry across three broad expenditure streams – cultural programme, marketing and communications and administration and operations costs. For Limerick this latter category includes venue costs, project operations and administration. It is noteworthy that the estimated expenditure for Derry/Londonderry across both the cultural programme and marketing expenditure strands is significantly higher than the actual expenditure in Limerick. While the programme in Limerick was constrained by the amount of funding available, two thirds of which was committed by the Department, Derry/Londonderry was more ambitious in its estimated expenditure despite no central Government funding being specifically allocated to support the year. It may be interesting to examine the factors behind this ambition and whether the devolution of responsibility for funding the title year contributed to this outcome as part of the forthcoming evaluation of the Derry/Londonderry city of culture year, with a view to informing future National City of Culture designations in Ireland. The costs (estimated and actual) for administration and operations are broadly similar, although the differing scale of the cultural programmes suggests an expectation of greater efficiency of operation for the Derry/Londonderry year.

Chart 3.8 Derry/Londonderry 2013 estimate & Limerick 2014 actual expenditure



As mentioned previously, the figures for Derry/Londonderry 2013 are based on published estimates rather than actual expenditure, which was unavailable at the time of writing. Accordingly, a more appropriate comparison for the Limerick year is with the EU Capitals of Culture. Table 3.7 sets out the expenditure breakdown for the eight Capitals of Culture between 2011 and 2014. To facilitate comparison, venue costs are compared with infrastructure costs and administration and project operations are treated as a single expenditure item.

In absolute terms the total expenditure for Limerick of €10.9 million is lower than all of the eight Capitals of Culture examined, with consequently lower expenditure across all expenditure strands. This may be explained by the limited resources available to Limerick in the first instance, but also by the greater scale of ambition for an EU Capital of Culture relative to a national city of culture. It should be noted that the EU Capitals of Culture also routinely receive funding from EU sources, including the Melina Mercouri prize of €1.5 million. There is one exception to this; Riga 2014 indicated a total expenditure on administration of €1.638 million which is less than the €1.829 million for Limerick.

Table 3.7 Expenditure - EU Capitals of Culture 2011 to 2014

Expenditure	Umea 2014	Riga 2014	Kosice 2013	Marseille-Provence 2013	Guimaraes 2012	Maribor 2012	Tallinn 2011	Turku 2011
Cultural Programme	€ 11,700,000	€ 21,021,000	€ 14,000,000	€ 59,700,000	€ 27,217,000	€ 21,880,938	€ 6,975,000	€ 36,136,000
Marketing & Communications	€ 2,100,000	€ 4,368,000	€ 2,000,000	€ 11,800,000	€ 7,300,000	€ 2,592,255	€ 3,562,000	€ 8,575,000
Infrastructure				€ 7,300,000				
Administration & Operations	€ 6,700,000	€ 1,638,000	€ 4,800,000	€ 19,600,000	€ 7,033,000	€ 3,851,460	€ 3,081,000	€ 9,166,000
Other	€ 1,500,000			€ 500,000		€ 73,819	€ 142,000	€ 317,000
Total Expenditure	€ 22,000,000	€ 27,027,000	€ 20,800,000	€ 98,900,000	€ 41,550,000	€ 28,398,472	€ 13,760,000	€ 54,194,000

Given the difference in the scale of the funding for EU Capitals of Culture against that of the Limerick City of Culture, a more appropriate comparison is provided in table 3.8 which offers a proportional breakdown between the four main categories of expenditure- cultural programming, marketing, infrastructure and administration/operations. From the table, it is clear that Limerick performed well against the EU average in terms of the proportion of expenditure which went on the cultural programme, however, its marketing and communications expenditure is well behind the EU average at 3.7%. Although the Capitals of Culture are required to include an element of international marketing in their programmes which may give rise to higher costs, the lower than average figure for Limerick may have contributed to the lower than expected sponsorship income and indeed the lower than expected audience figures for *No Fit State*. That said, as noted previously, some marketing expenditure was included under the administration category in early 2014 with a consequent underreporting of the actual marketing expenditure.

The table also shows a higher proportion of expenditure on infrastructure and other costs relative to the EU average. The figure of 0.92% for the EU average is likely to be an underestimation as many of the Capitals of Culture reported infrastructure activity but did not provide separate figures for the activity. As such, it is assumed that infrastructure was included in the cultural programming expenditure category. Finally, as discussed previously, the administration and operational costs for Limerick are less than the EU average.

Table 3.8 Proportional Expenditure on Main Categories of City/Capital of Culture Expenditure

	EU Average	LCoC 2014
Cultural Programme as a % of Total Expenditure	64.82%	73.43%
Marketing as a % of Total Expenditure	14.46%	3.70%
Infrastructure & Other costs as % of Total Expenditure	0.92%	6.10%
Administration & Operations as % of Total Expenditure	18.65%	16.78%

The funding for individual elements of the cultural programme is examined in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Output Analysis – Creativity and Innovation

4.1. Evaluation Framework & Specific Objectives

The evaluation framework for the Limerick City of Culture year (table 1.2) identified a set of four specific objectives, referred to as pillars by the Limerick company, each with a number of associated output indicators. The following chapters examine these outputs and assess the level to which the specific objectives/pillars (listed below) were achieved during the title year:

- Encouraging and supporting creativity and innovation;
- Creating opportunities for access to and participation in cultural activities;
- Supporting cultural partnerships and collaborations; and
- Creating opportunities for the Limerick cultural sector to connect with the wider world.

The data underpinning the output analysis in this chapter and chapter 5, including in relation to financial information, are based on responses received by Limerick City of Culture to a questionnaire sent to all of the projects which received funding under the cultural programme. Because of the self-reported nature of the responses and the fact that they were not subject to audit by Limerick City of Culture, there are some limitations within the data i.e. not all projects provided responses to each element of the questionnaire, not all projects were included in the questionnaire, and, for these reasons, the funding to respondents does represent the full cost of the cultural programme.

In addition, it should be noted that information on the outputs of the EU Capitals of Culture over the period 2009 to 2014 was also limited in some places as not all Capitals provided all of the information required and, given the nature of some of the output indicators, the information was not always comparable with the data collected in Limerick. Where this arises, it is noted in the text.

4.2. Creativity and Innovation

This chapter addresses the outputs from the creativity and innovation pillar. Limerick City of Culture elaborated on the *creativity and innovation* objective as follows:

- *To provide opportunities for creativity and innovation and new ideas using the landscape of the city, its locations and environment;*
- *To encourage ambitious, bold and daring projects and programmes; and*
- *To reimagine ‘Limerick City’ through quality cultural and creative original projects and programmes.*

The evaluation framework identifies four research indicators to measure the level of outputs associated with this objective, set out in table 4.1. These will be examined individually and in comparison with EU Capitals of Culture in each of the following sections.

Table 4.1 Research indicators for Creativity and Innovation

Creativity and Innovation	Total number of projects and events
	Value (financial) of cultural programmes
	Number of Artists Employed/Supported
	Number of original works commissioned

4.3. Projects and Events

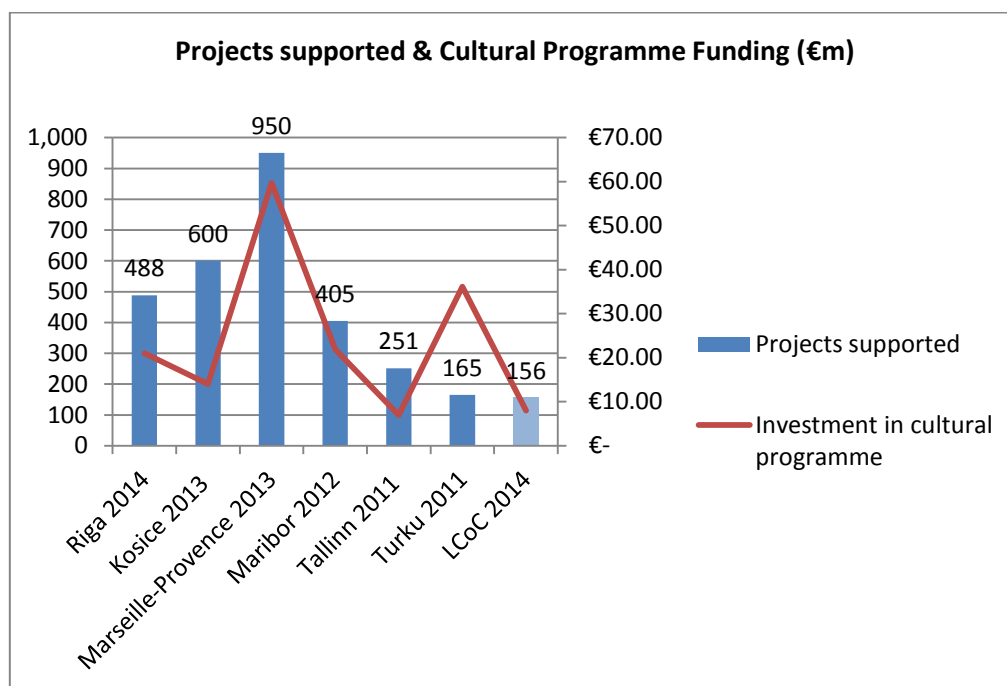
The Limerick City of Culture commenced with the flagship *Riverdance* performance in January 2014 and delivered some 3,000 events over the course of the year, through 152 separate projects. Four further projects took place in 2015. The 152 projects included in the programme for 2014 are broken down as follows:

- International – over the course of the year, 11 events involving international artists were supported including the Royal de Luxe, Fuerza Bruta!, Proms in the Park, and Denis Tricot;
- Commissioning – 11 projects were commissioned as part of the 2014 year;
- Legacy – 13 projects were supported;
- ‘*Made in Limerick*’ – 105 projects received support under the grant programme; and
- 12 other events were supported.

A further 85 projects around the city benefitted from in-kind support provided by the National City of Culture. This support consisted of publicity for the project, with additional support being provided to four projects (location for three and help with insurance for one). These projects are not included in the analysis below.

Chart 4.1 compares this performance, in terms of projects supported, with a number of EU Capitals of Culture. From the chart it is clear that Limerick delivered the lowest number of projects (in absolute terms), although this is not surprising given that the funding available for Limerick’s cultural programme (€8.005 million) was significantly less than for the majority of the Capitals of Culture, with the exception of Tallinn 2011 (€6.975 million). When this is taken into account, Limerick’s performance can be considered more positively, particularly when compared with Turku which invested €36.14 million and delivered only 165 projects.

Chart 4.1 International Comparison: Projects supported & Cultural Programme Funding



These data were also used to examine the average cost per project, based on the total investment in the cultural programme and the total number of projects, set out in table 4.2. Here a slightly different picture emerges, with Limerick appearing mid-table, with higher costs than Kosice, Tallinn and Riga, but lower costs than Maribor, Marseille-Provence and Turku. While these figures should be treated with caution, as not all cultural programme funding may have been invested in projects and different jurisdictions have different production costs, they do indicate that Limerick’s average costs are consistent with the median performance for the EU Capitals of Culture.

Table 4.2 Comparison of Average Cost per Project.

Average cost per project	Kosice 2013	Tallinn 2011	Riga 2014	LCoC 2014	Maribor 2012	Marseille-Provence 2013	Turku 2011
	€ 23,333	€ 27,789	€ 43,076	€ 51,315	€ 54,027	€ 62,842	€219,006

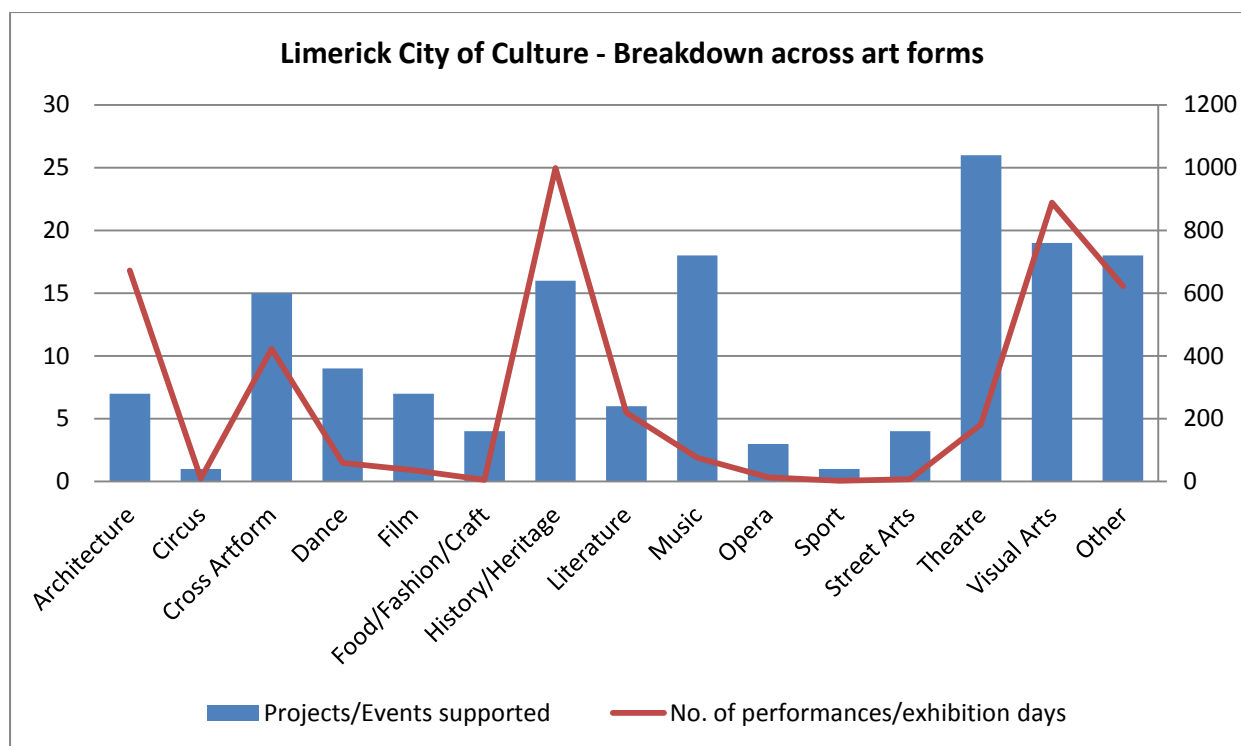
Of the 154 projects for which information was available, 1,630 performances and 2,589 exhibition days were delivered under the cultural programme. Again, it is possible to compare these figures with the performance of a number of EU Capitals of Culture, as set out in Table 4.3. Again, Limerick’s performance is mid-table, with the same number of events as Kosice 2013 which had a cultural programme investment of €6 million more than Limerick.

Table 4.3 International Comparison: Numbers of Events

Number of Events	Umea 2014	Guimaraes 2012	Kosice 2013	LCoC 2014	Maribor 2012	Tallinn 2011	Turku 2011
	1,054	1,300	3,000	3,000	5,264	7,000	8,000

Looking next to the content of the cultural programme, Chart 4.2 provides a breakdown of the projects and events supported across the various artforms, as well as information on the number of performances/exhibition days for each. It should be noted that information on the latter relates to only 134 of the project/events as not all projects provided the required information.

Chart 4.2 Projects and Performances/Exhibition days across Artforms



The chart shows that the highest number of projects supported by Limerick City of Culture in theatre (26), visual arts (19) and music (18), with circus (1), sport (1) and opera (3) receiving the least number of supported projects. As expected, the number of performances/exhibition days generally tracks the number of projects/events supported with the following notable exceptions. On one end of the spectrum, we see high number of projects supported in theatre and music, but with, relatively speaking, small numbers of performances i.e.

- 26 theatre projects received support, offering 182 performances as part of the Limerick City of Culture year. This is an average of 7 performances per project; and
- 18 music projects were supported, with 76 performances offered to the public. This yields an average of 4 performances per project.

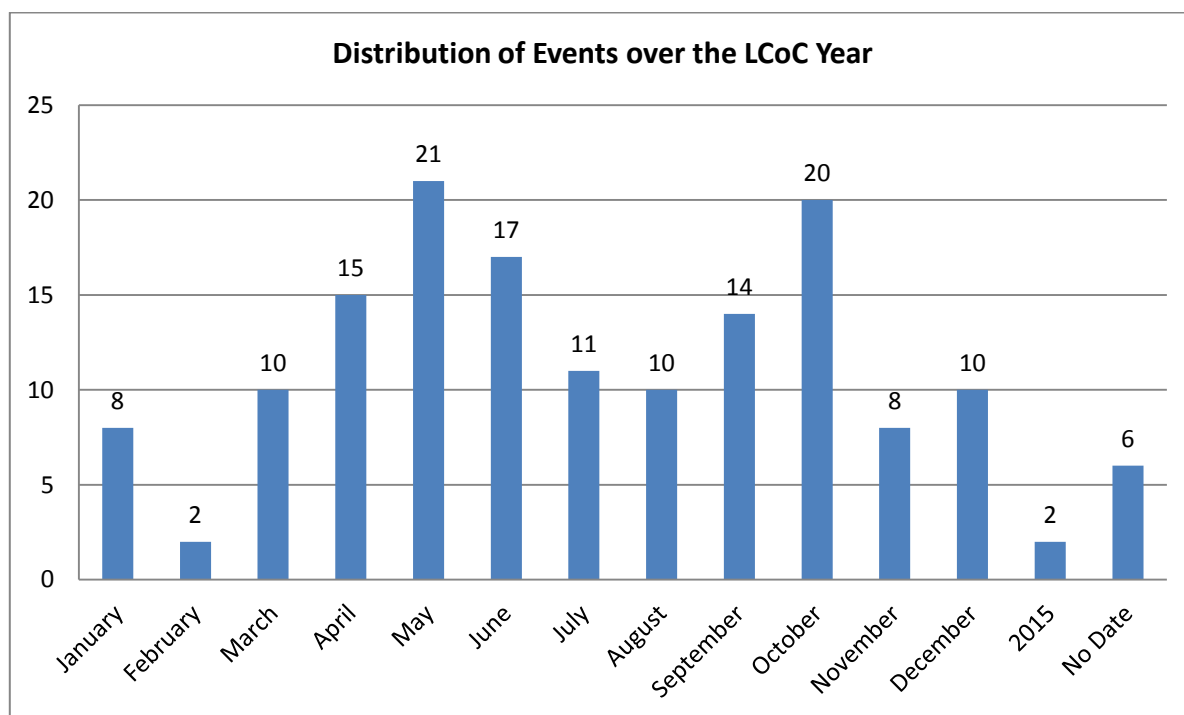
The other end of the spectrum sees relatively few architecture and heritage/history projects supported, but both have high numbers of exhibition days i.e.

- 7 architecture projects received support, offering 672 exhibition days to the public. This is an average of 96 exhibition days per project; and
- 16 projects classed as history/heritage received funding, with 999 exhibition days, yielding an average of 62 days per project.

This finding reflects the fact that exhibitions typically run for longer periods, given that the installation costs are once-off rather than ongoing for the duration of the exhibition. By contrast, each theatre or music performance will require the same costs – venue, lighting, sound, performers etc. with relatively few economies of scale accruing.

Chart 4.3 sets out the distribution of projects and events throughout the year (by date of first showing/performance). It is clear from the chart that there was an uneven distribution of events throughout the year, with activity peaking in May and October. Changes in the management and constitution of the board in late 2013 resulted in the cultural programme for the title year not being finalised until January and February with consequently lower programme activity during those months. This challenge was addressed by March with a steady increase in projects and events to May 2014. There followed a small trough in July and August, holiday months, followed by another peak in activity in September and October. November and December also showed lower levels of activity as the year wound down to its conclusion. The organisers noted the challenge in managing delivery of projects and events throughout the year where projects were delayed, cancelled or otherwise altered throughout the year e.g. 8 projects in the International and Commissioning strands were cancelled over the year, while only 109 of the 111 projects approved under the 'Made in Limerick' strand were delivered. This required flexibility on the part of the organisers to find additional projects from those originally envisaged to ensure a sustainable programme over the course of the year. Of these, output information was only available for 107 projects.

Chart 4.3 Distribution of Projects/Events over the Limerick City of Culture year



4.4. Value of Cultural Programme

Section 3.4 (Chapter 3) and section 4.3 examined the total expenditure on the cultural programme for the Limerick City of Culture year, and found that, on a proportional basis, it compared favourably with the value of such programming for EU Capitals of Culture over the period 2011 to 2014.

This section expands on that analysis examining the value of the individual strands of the cultural programme; International, Commissioning, Legacy, 'Made in Limerick' and a number of Other projects. Given the differing focuses for the cultural programmes of individual Capitals of Culture, depending on the local priorities identified, it is not possible to compare the investment in the individual strands of the Limerick City of Culture with international comparators.

As mentioned in section 4.1 of this Chapter, the analysis in this section is based on self-reported figures by projects supported under the cultural programme and does not represent the full investment in the cultural programme. In addition, the information provided by the projects has not been audited by Limerick City of Culture. That said, the figures account for 97.85% of the total expenditure under the cultural programme.

Table 4.4 sets out the number of projects, total project costs, grant received from Limerick City of Culture as well as other funding from other sources. The table shows that while the total cost of the projects was €9.49 million, 75.89% was met by the City of Culture. The remaining 24% was leveraged from other funding sources (including sponsors), in-kind supports and box office/event receipts.

Table 4.4 Limerick City of Culture - Project Income and Expenditure Overview

Programme Strand	No. of Projects	Total project costs	LCoC Grant	Other funding	In-kind supports	Income from event receipts/box office
International	11	€ 4,075,173	€ 4,047,405	€ 27,768	€ 16,000	€ 749,707
Commissioning	11	€ 583,052	€ 290,965	€ 10,296	€ 201,958	€ 83,988
Legacy	13	€ 962,381	€ 948,000	€ 14,381		€ 4,644
'Made in Limerick'	109	€ 3,256,914	€ 2,173,886	€ 416,571	€ 453,233	€ 272,451
Other	12	€ 610,273	€ 372,757	€ 67,216	€ 16,000	€ 154,300
Totals	156	€ 9,487,792	€ 7,833,013	€ 536,232	€ 687,191	€ 1,265,090
<i>As a % of funding</i>			75.89%	5.20%	6.66%	12.26%

4.4.1. *International Programme*

The objective of the International programme was to bring international acts and events to Limerick thereby broadening the Irish artistic and cultural experience.

This strand included 11 events which projects reported cost a total of €4.075 million, of which €4.047 million was met by Limerick City of Culture as follows:

- New Year's Eve
- Riverdance
- Royal de Luxe – locally known as 'the Granny'
- No Fit State circus
- Fuerza Bruta!
- Proms in the Park
- Richard Mosse
- Theatre Forum Conference
- Winter Carnival
- Anu/Performance Corporation – Beautiful Dreamers
- Denis Tricot

Although the Anu/Performance Corporation's Beautiful Dreamers and Denis Tricot's installation on the banks of the Shannon were funded by the International strand, they were also categorised elsewhere as part of the Commissioning strand. Given the objective of the International strand to bring international acts to Limerick, it would seem that this is a more appropriate categorisation for the Anu/Performance Corporation production although the scale of the funding provided may have influenced its final inclusion in the International strand. For future Cities of Culture, it is critical that

all projects and events contribute to the achievement of the stated objective of the relevant programme strand. This is to ensure that funding is appropriately used for its stated objectives.

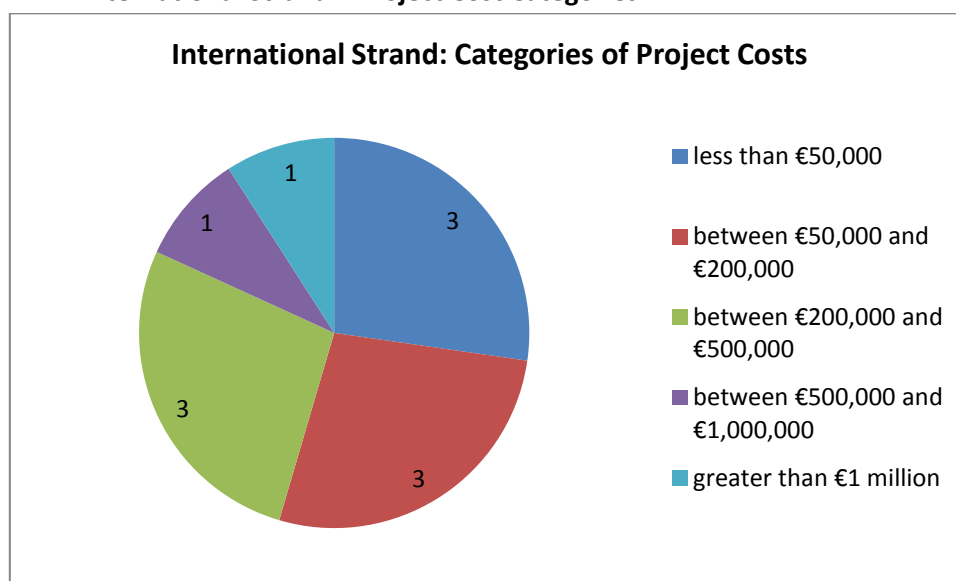
Table 4.5 provides details of the total costs of the strand, and the sources of income leveraged to meet these costs. The costs of the International strand were largely borne by the City of Culture itself (83.89%), with an additional grant of €27,768 provided by the Arts Council for the Richard Mosse event. 15.54% of total funding came from box office and other event receipts. Four of the events were non-ticketed – New Year’s Eve, Royal de Luxe, Richard Mosse and Denis Tricot, while the Proms in the Park was a free ticket event. That said, the strand generated some €0.75 million in box office and event receipts, mainly from Riverdance, Fuerza Bruta! and No Fit State, which were reinvested in the overall cultural programme. In broad terms, this represents the totality of box office receipts which were directly used by Limerick City of Culture in the delivery of the programme (discussed in section 3.3.3). For the remaining programme stands, box office receipts were used directly by projects.

Table 4.5 International Strand: Income and Expenditure

International Strand	LCoC Grant	Other funding	Income from event receipts/box office	Total project costs
Totals for 11 Projects	€ 4,047,405	€ 27,768	€ 749,707	€ 4,075,173
% of total funding	83.89%	0.57%	15.54%	

Chart 4.3 provides additional detail on the breakdown of costs for each project in the International strand. In all, the distribution of project costs is fairly balanced with three projects in each of the three lowest categories of project cost. The two highest cost projects were Royal de Luxe at €1.69 million and Fuerza Bruta! at €0.91 million.

Chart 4.4 International Strand – Project Cost Categories



Of the ticketed events – the proportion of complimentary tickets issued varied widely:

- No Fit State – 0%
- Riverdance – 2.9%
- Fuerza Bruta! – 6.12%
- Anu/Performance Corp/Beautiful Dreamers – 17.65%
- Winter Carnival – 90%

The first three events listed compare favourably with the average proportion of complimentary tickets (9.09%) issued by the 49 organisations that participated in the research for Theatre Forum’s annual Audiences for the Performing Arts in Ireland report in 2014. The levels of complimentary tickets increased significantly above this average for Anu/Performance Corporation’s Beautiful Dreamers production and, most significantly, for the Winter Carnival. The high level of complimentary tickets for the Winter Carnival is explained by the fact that it included three performances; one of which was a ticketed free event, one was a non-ticketed free event and one which was a paid ticketed event. The free tickets were recorded as complimentary. In conclusion, it is clear that, although a large number of tickets issued were complimentary, for the highest revenue generating projects the level of complimentary tickets was maintained at a low level, thereby maximising their revenue generation potential.

4.4.2. *Commissioning*

This strand of the cultural programme was designed to offer opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners to create and present new and/or innovative works. The total cost of the Commissioning strand was €583,052, of which, 57.82% was funded by the Limerick City of Culture, as set out in table 4.6. This is the lowest contribution made by Limerick City of Culture across all of the other programme strands. This strand also benefited from in-kind supports of 23.24%, box office receipts worth 12.59% and a relatively small amount of other funding (3.48%).

Table 4.6 Commissioning Strand: Income and Expenditure

Commissioning Strand	LCoC Grant	Other funding	In-kind supports	Income from event receipts/box office	Total project costs
Totals for 11 Projects	€290,965	€10,296	€201,958	€83,988	€583,052
% of total funding	57.82%	3.48%	23.24%	12.59%	

The strand supported 11 projects as follows:

- Four theatre projects: Sive (Abbey Theatre), Tiny Plays for Limerick (Fishamble & Underneath), Children’s Festival and Hub (the Lime Tree), and Theatre Shop (The Park Kiosk);
- One dance project – Sadler’s Wells - Still Current;
- One music project – Bill Whelan’s Gala Concert;
- One visual arts exhibition – Humberto Vélez;
- One opera project – Chamber Made; and

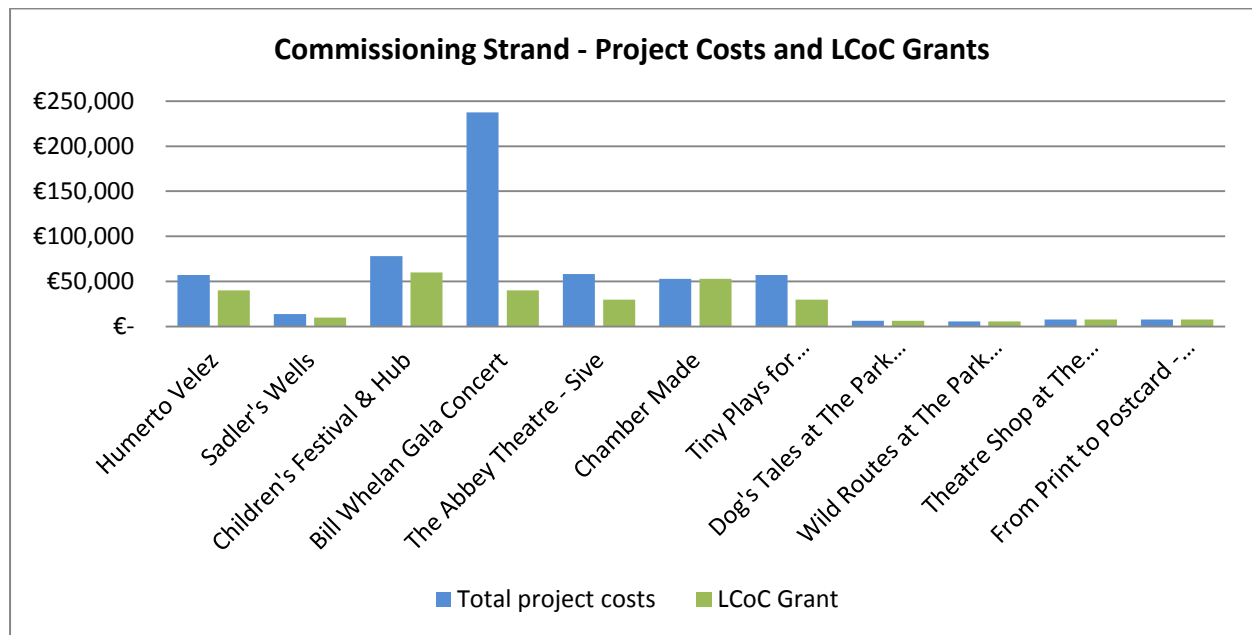
- Three projects categorised as Other produced at the Park Kiosk: Dog Tales, From Print to Postcard and Wild Routes.

As with some of the projects supported under the International strand, two projects funded under the Commissioning strand were also categorised as ‘international’ within the company’s records; Humberto Vélez’s EVA international Cup 2014 and Chamber Made’s opera. In both of these cases, the projects were new works commissioned by the Limerick City of Culture, involving the public and Irish artists respectively and as such are consistent with the strand’s objective of creating new and innovative works. Accordingly, it is considered appropriate that both are included in this strand, although the artist and company are international.

There are, however, two projects included in this strand which, it is considered, do not contribute to the achievement of the objective of creating and presenting new and/or innovative works in that they were existing productions for which tour dates in Limerick were included i.e. Sive (Abbey Theatre) and Still Current (Sadler’s Wells). While these events undoubtedly contributed to the broader objectives of the City of Culture year, it is important that all events receiving funding under a particular programme strand contribute to the achievement of the specific objectives for that strand. As stated previously, this should be addressed in the planning and delivery of future Cities of Culture.

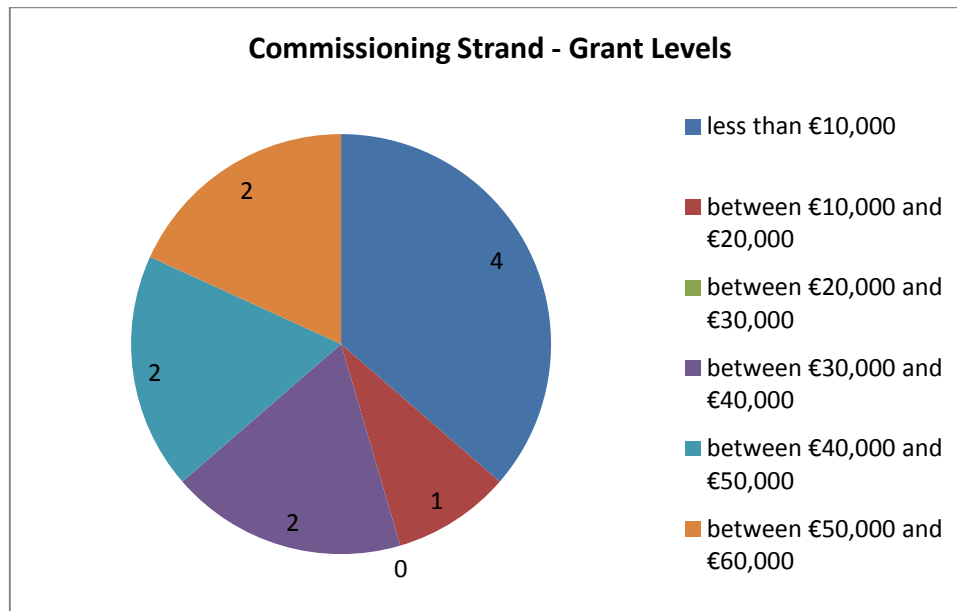
Chart 4.5 sets out the total project costs and grant received from Limerick City of Culture. The average cost per project was €53,000, while the average grant provided by the Limerick City of Culture was €26,500. This latter figure compares reasonably well with the average grant for project funding made by the Arts Council in 2014 of €21,638. The highest cost project was Bill Whelan’s gala concert at €237,531 but it received a relatively modest grant of €40,000 as much of the cost was met from in-kind supports from RTÉ (€162,500). The projects also generated funding from box office revenue and grants from theatres and other bodies to defray the costs of the project. In terms of the overall outturn for the projects, only one project recorded a deficit – Humberto Vélez (€1,102) while Sive and Chamber Made both recorded modest profits of €1,256 and €4,000 respectively. The balance of the 11 projects broke even.

Chart 4.5 Commissioning Strand – Project Costs and Limerick City of Culture Grants



In terms of the distribution of grants provided, four were for less than €10,000 with the balance between €10,000 and €20,000 (as shown in chart 4.6). The highest grant provided was €60,000 to the Children’s Festival and Hub at the Lime Tree.

Chart 4.6 Distribution of Grants – Commissioning Strand



Of the 11 projects, six were ticketed, four were not ticketed (the Park Kiosk projects) and no data were available for the Humberto Vález project. Of the ticketed events - the proportion of complimentary tickets issued varied, although less widely than for the projects included in the International strand, as follows:

- Chamber Made – 0%

- Children’s Festival & Hub – 1.02%
- Bill Whelan’s Gala Concert – 8.91%
- Sadler’s Wells – Still Current – 9.09%
- Sive, Abbey Theatre – 17.72%
- Tiny Plays for Limerick - 32.08%

Again, comparing the level of complimentary tickets with the average from the Theatre Forum report (2014), Chamber Made and the Children’s Festival and Hub are both below the 9.09% average while Bill Whelan’s Gala Concert and Still Current are broadly in line with the average. As with the International strand, the remaining two events are above the average, with Tiny Plays for Limerick significantly so. While the function of this strand was not specifically to generate revenue for the City of Culture year, it is noted that greater box office returns offer a means of freeing up City of Culture funding to support additional events. For future Cities of Culture, a strategy for the use of complimentary tickets should be put in place prior to the event e.g. for sponsors, to generate interest in events etc.

4.4.3. *Legacy*

This strand set out to support projects which would continue to offer cultural opportunities and benefits during and after the title year. As with the previous categories, some projects included in this strand are categorised differently depending on the source of information i.e. budget or event records. To ensure consistency with the data used in the social and economic impact studies commissioned by Limerick City of Culture, the event records categorisation is used here. That said, it is critical that, for future Cities of Culture, all projects and events use a single categorisation to ensure that there is clarity on the contribution of funded projects to the achievement of the stated objective of the relevant programme strand.

Table 4.7 shows that the total cost of the 13 projects included in the Legacy strand was €962,381, of which €948,000 was funded by way of grants from Limerick City of Culture. This strand generated the least amount of income by way of other funding and box office receipts. However, this latter finding may be a function of the types of events included in the strand (discussed later in this section) including writer in residence supports, a film commissioning competition, and a public art project.

Table 4.7 Legacy Strand: Income and Expenditure

Legacy Strand	LCoC Grant	Other funding	Income from event receipts/box office	Total project costs
Totals for 13 Projects	€ 948,000	€ 14,381	€ 4,644	€ 962,381
% of total funding	98.03%	1.47%	0.48%	

The 13 projects are listed below:

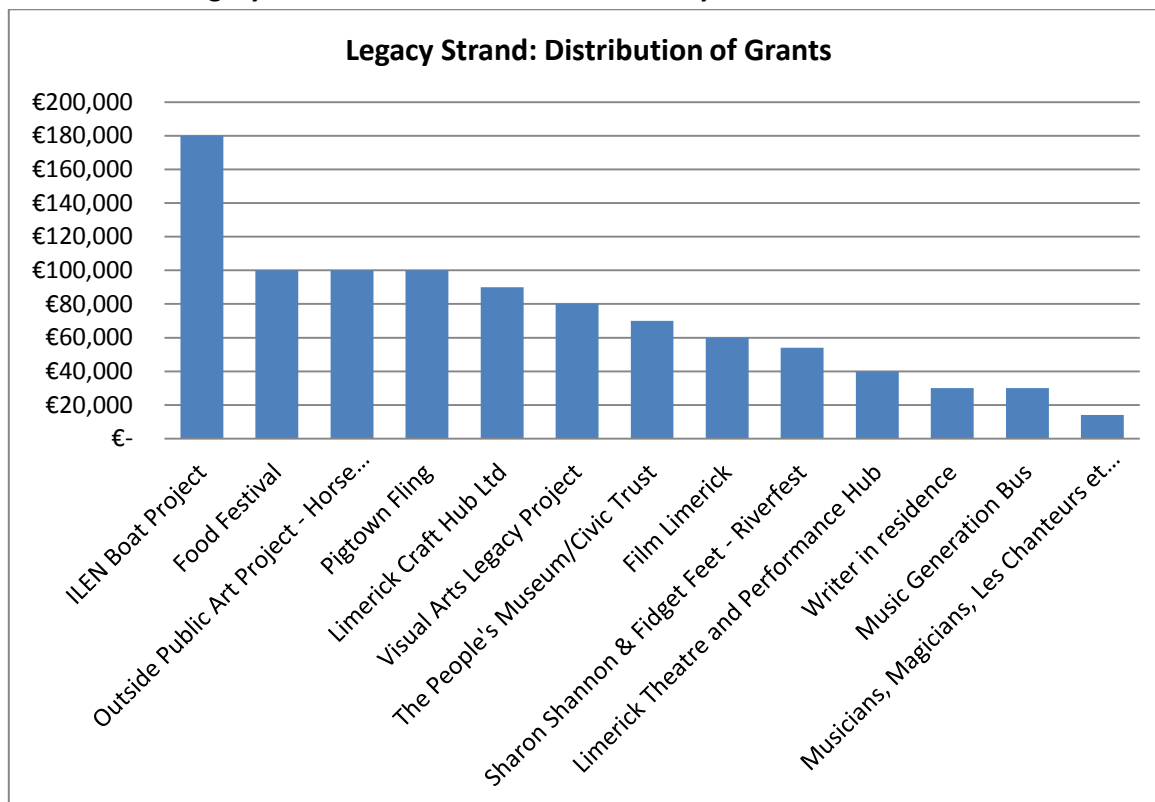
- Two food/fashion/craft projects: Limerick Craft Hub Ltd. and the Food Festival;
- Two music projects: Pigtown Fling and the Music Generation Bus;
- Two projects categorised as Other: Horse Outside Project (public art) and ILEN Boat Project;

- One theatre project: Limerick Theatre and Performance Hub;
- One visual arts project: The Visual Arts Legacy Project;
- One literature project: Support for the writer in residence initiative;
- One film project: Behind the Scenes, Film Limerick;
- One street arts project: Musicians, Magicians, Les Chanteurs et Jokers, Eightball;
- One project categorised as history/heritage: The People’s Museum/Civic Trust; and
- One cross artform project: The Riverfest Arts Festival.

The projects were examined to assess whether they were consistent with the objectives of the Legacy programme strand. In general, the projects demonstrated consistency with the objective of offering cultural opportunities beyond the city of culture year, falling into three broad categories – capacity building/resource organisations supports, infrastructure or facilities provision, and annual/repeated events. There was one exception to this; the Musicians, Magicians, les Chanteurs et Jokers appears to have been a once off event. As with the Commissioning strand, the value of the project within the overall cultural programme is not in question, however, every effort should be taken to ensure that all projects in a particular strand contribute to the achievement of the objectives of that strand.

The level of grant funding provided was generally higher than for the Commissioning strand, with an average grant of €74,029. Chart 4.7 provides more information on the individual grants which ranged from €14,000 to €180,000. Unlike the Commissioning strand, it was not possible to directly compare the average grant levels with those of the Arts Council given the differing types of projects supported e.g. support for resource organisations, festivals, facilities provision. In addition, the Arts Council generally provides a contributory grant to organisations and artists, especially in the case of festivals and events whereas the full costs of most of the projects in this strand were borne by Limerick City of Culture.

Chart 4.7 Legacy Strand - Distribution of Limerick City of Culture Grants



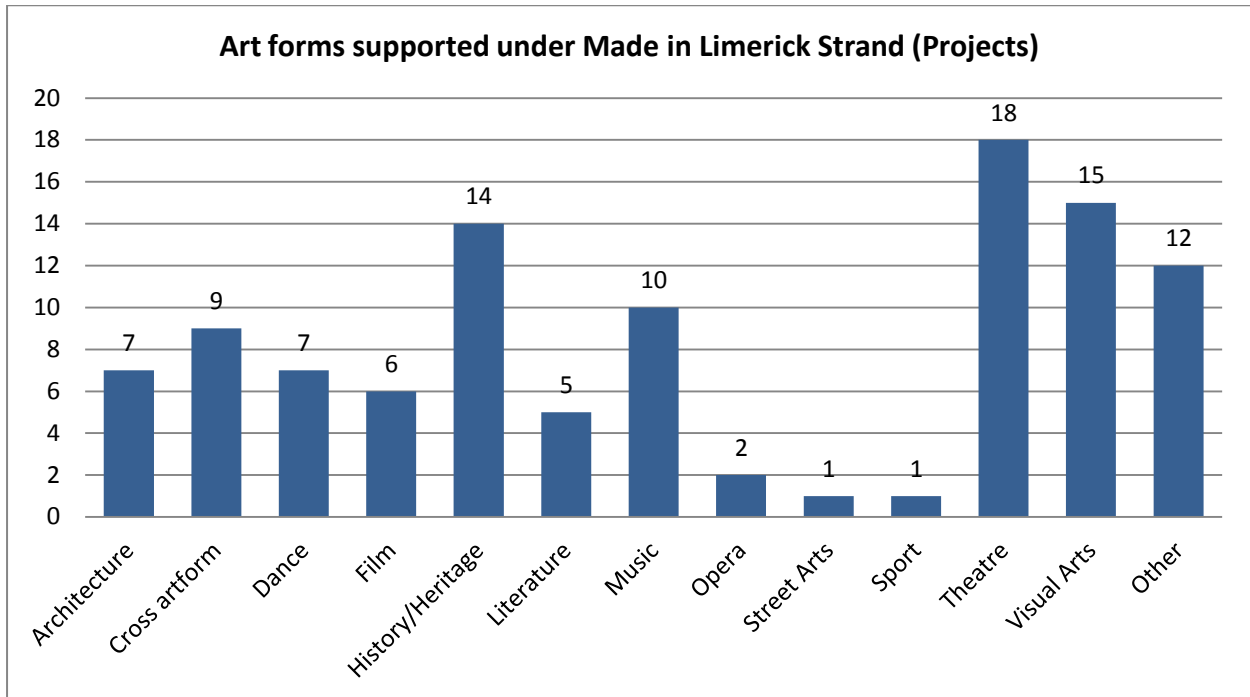
The majority of projects included in this strand, by their nature, were not ticketed events. Of the four ticketed events – the Food Festival, Pigtown Fling, Film Limerick and the Limerick Theatre and Performance hub – box office income information was only available for Pigtown Fling which generated an income of €4,664 for the event. Information on the levels of complimentary tickets was available for both Pigtown Fling and the Limerick Theatre and Performance Hub, at 22.6% and 43.94% of all tickets respectively. Both figures are higher than the Theatre Forum average of 9.09%.

4.4.4. *'Made in Limerick'*

This programme of small grants was established with objective of developing the interest and involvement of local communities in culture and the City of Culture year. Following an open call, 320 applications were received for funding under the strand. Of these, 109 (34%) were deemed suitable for support after assessment with 107 being delivered. This level of successful application is somewhat behind the Arts Council average of 42.29% (over the period 2010-2012) although it is ahead of the percentage of successful applications for the Arts Council's project awards of 22.72% over the same period. Two further projects, at the Park Kiosk, were also approved for inclusion in the strand, but information on the application process was not provided.

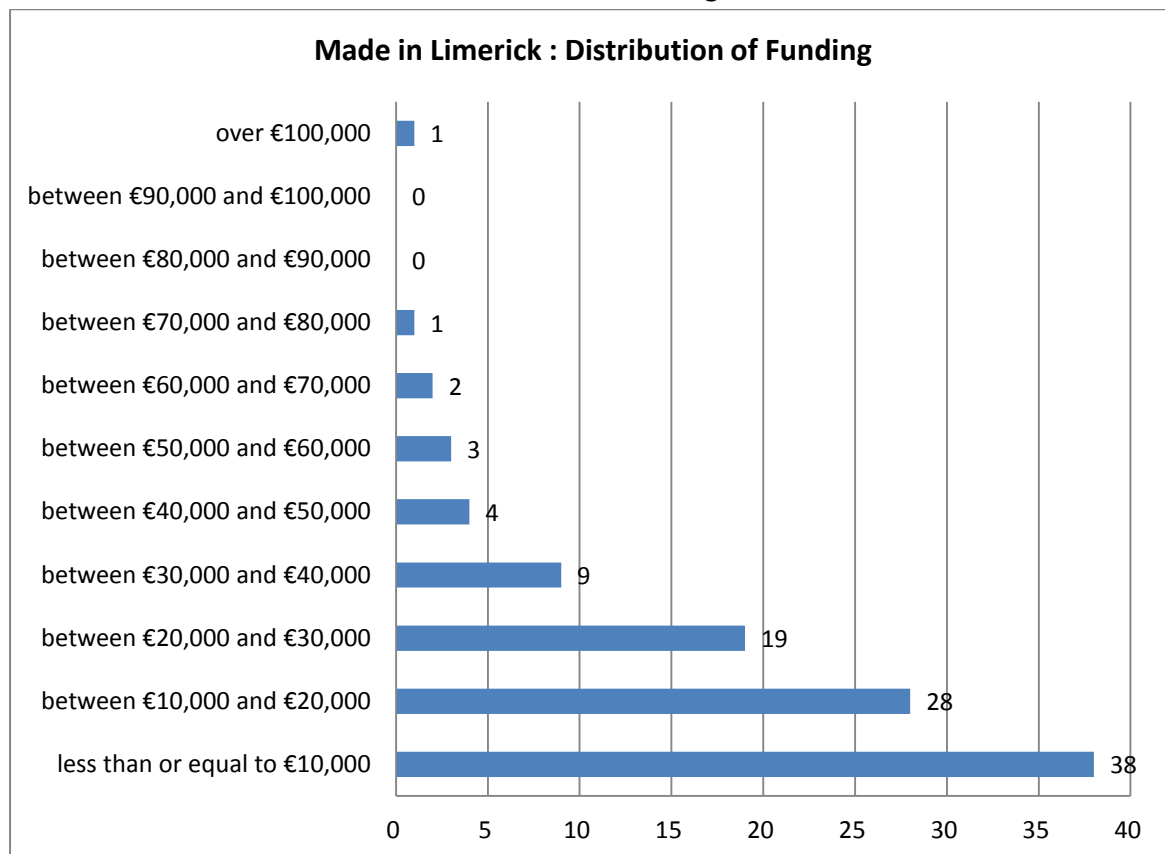
Chart 4.8 demonstrates the distribution of 'Made in Limerick' projects across the various art forms. It should be noted that this chart relates to 105 projects only as the information was not available for four projects. The distribution is closely aligned to the overall distribution of projects across art forms for the entire cultural programme (chart 4.2) although this is to be expected given that this strand accounts for 69.48% of all projects supported.

Chart 4.8 'Made in Limerick' Strand: Distribution of projects by art form



There was a broad range of funding awards made under this strand ranging from the lowest of €519 (Limerick Peals) to the highest grant of €140,000 (Community Opera – the Oldest Woman in Limerick). The average grant for the 'Made in Limerick' strand was €20,704 although most projects received less than this with the median grant being €15,000. That said, the average grant compares favourably with the average grant for project funding made by the Arts Council in 2014 of €21,638. Chart 4.9 sets out the distribution of funding awards made under the 'Made in Limerick' strand.

Chart 4.9 'Made in Limerick': Distribution of funding awards



From the chart, it is clear that the majority of grants were on the lower end of the scale with 80.95% being below €30,000. Of the higher value grants – 18.09% were between €30,000 and €80,000, with only one project in excess of that figure (€140,000). It is noted that the application form used and assessment undertaken did not alter depending on the scale of the project proposed. It is considered important for future Cities of Culture that higher value grants require a higher level of assessment to ensure that the objectives of the programme stand and, more importantly, the objectives of the city of culture year are met by the investment. In addition, a more tailored approach to the application process (based on proposed value) would ensure that applicants for relatively small grant amounts would not expend a disproportionate amount of effort in the preparation of the application.

Table 4.8 sets out the total costs for the 'Made in Limerick' projects and sets them against the income received from all sources. It should be noted that this table is based on 105 projects for which returns were received, and includes some estimated figures and omitted figures where project organisers did not have final figures. From the table, it is clear that the majority of funding for the 'Made in Limerick' strand was provided by Limerick City of Culture grants (65.55%). The next most significant source of funding was estimated value of in-kind benefits received (13.67% of all funding received). The projects also received funding from a range of other sources including the Local Authority, businesses, venues, community groups and private donations amounting to 12.56% of all funding received. Box office receipts were a relatively modest source of funding for the projects at 8.22%, however, this may be due to the fact that 59 of the 105 projects did not issue tickets.

Table 4.8 'Made in Limerick' Strand: Income and Expenditure

'Made in Limerick' Strand	Income from ticket sales	LCoC Grant	Other funding received	Total in-kind funding	Total project costs
Totals for 105 Projects	€ 272,451	€ 2,173,886	€ 416,571	€ 453,233	€ 3,256,914
% of funding	8.22%	65.55%	12.56%	13.67%	

Of the 46 ticketed projects, information on ticket numbers was available for 41 projects. In all, 30,192 tickets were issued under the 'Made in Limerick' strand, of which 41.05% were complimentary. As with the findings for other programme strands, this is significantly higher than for the Theatre Forum average of 9.09%. The average number of tickets issued was 656, while the median was 290 tickets reflecting the impact of a small number of high volume ticketed events. There was a broad spread in the number of tickets issued by projects from 15 (Logical Fallacies) to 5,605 (Limerick LGBTQ Pride Festival). A profit of €59,000 was generated for the projects from this strand.

4.4.5. *Other Projects*

The final element of the cultural programme was 12 projects which did not fit into the previous four categories. They included four music projects including the year-long programme at Dolan's Warehouse, two cross artform events – Culture Night and Happenings, two student fashion events, a history/heritage project at the Frank McCourt Museum, and a street arts project (Christmas Lights), a theatre project (the Passion) and the Salon du Chat discussion series.

Table 4.9 provides details of the funding and project costs for the 12 projects. Relative to the other programme strands, the percentage grant from Limerick City of Culture is on the lower end of the scale (although not the lowest) at 61.08%. This funding was leveraged to generate box office receipts of €154,300 (25.28%) with additional funding and sponsorships making up the difference in the overall costs. It should be noted that the figure for box office receipts is exclusively in relation to the annual programme at Dolan's Warehouse as the information was not provided by the other projects.

Table 4.9 Other Projects: Income and Expenditure

Other projects	LCoC Grant	Other funding received	Income from event receipts/box office	Sponsorship	Total project costs
Totals for 12 projects	€ 372,757	€ 67,216	€ 154,300	€ 16,000	€ 610,273
% of total funding	61.08%	11.01%	25.28%	2.62%	

8 of the projects received grants of €10,000 or less which compares well with the other expenditure categories. Of the remaining four projects - two received grants of around €50,000 (Happenings and the LSAD fashion show) while the highest grants of €100,000 and €120,000 went to the Special Olympics Opening Ceremony (music) and Dolan's Warehouse annual programme respectively.

Four of the projects supported reported issuing tickets, of which the Special Olympics Opening Ceremony was a free ticketed event. One project did not provide a return that provided details of whether it issued tickets. Of the three projects that issued and charged for tickets, the levels of complimentary tickets are set out as follows:

- Limerick International Fashion Student Awards – 9.09%;
- LSAD Fashion Show – 14.5%; and
- Dolan’s Warehouse – 9.43%.

These figures compare well with the Theatre Forum average of 9.09%, as well as when compared to the levels of complimentary tickets issued elsewhere in the programme.

4.5. Number of Artists Employed/Supported

Limerick City of Culture funding was conditional on a range of information being provided, including in relation to the number of artists and other staff employed during the project. The required data were provided by 142 of the projects, although four of these only provided a partial return. Of the data available, table 4.10 sets out the total numbers employed in the delivery of the projects. Artists are defined as ‘all creative personnel including stage, lighting and sound designers’. Information on earnings or employment status e.g. full-time, part-time etc. was not provided by the projects.

Table 4.10 Total Employment supported by Limerick City of Culture

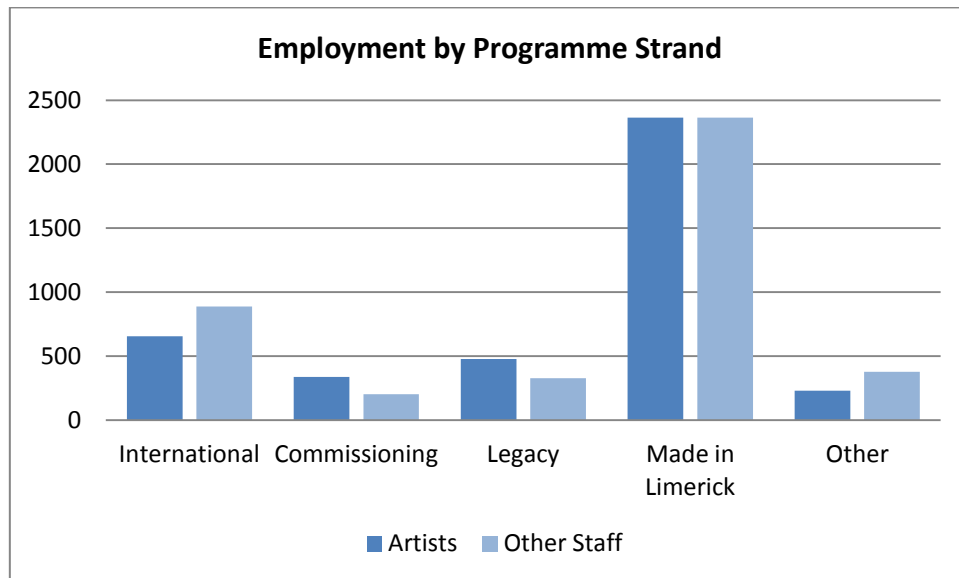
Employment supported by LCoC	Limerick artists	Irish artists (excluding Limerick)	International artists	Other Staff	Total staff
	2384	1057	619	4158	8218

In all, the national city of culture provided support for projects which employed almost 2,400 Limerick artists and 1,060 Irish artists from outside Limerick. The number of international artists supported by the project was less at almost 620. In addition, some 4,150 staff, other than those classified as artists, were supported by the project grants. These would have included administration, marketing and sales staff. Each project supported an average of 58 staff across the four categories.

These 8,218 staff are distributed by programme strand in chart 4.10. The highest number of staff recorded was for the ‘Made in Limerick’ strand with 4,727. This accounted for more than half of the total staff number provided. This is unsurprising given that over two thirds of projects supported were in this strand. The next highest staff numbers were in the International strand (1,541), followed by Legacy (805), Other (606) and Commissioning (539). It is to be expected that the International strand would require significant staff numbers given the scale of many of the events e.g. Royal de Luxe. The average staff for each project varies with each strand, with the highest being 154 for the International strand which is to be expected given the scale (including in financial value terms) of the projects. This is followed by averages of 48 (‘Made in Limerick’), 49 (Commissioning), 55 (Other) and 73 (Legacy). In terms of the breakdown between artists and other staff, the ‘Made in Limerick’ strand had broadly equal numbers of both, while the International and

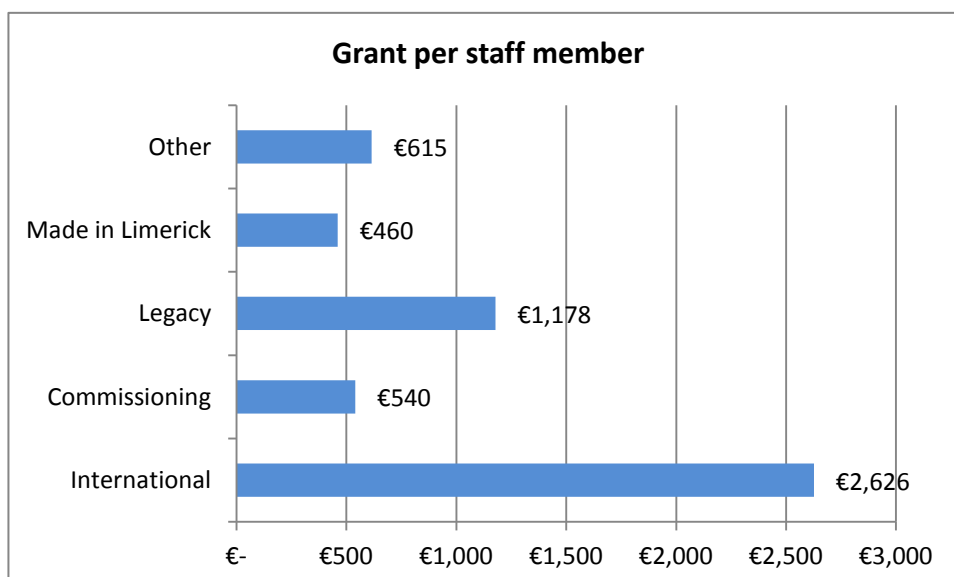
Other strands had fewer artists than other staff. This again reflects the greater administrative requirements for some of the international acts and the inclusion of a number of festivals and fashion events in the 'Other' strand. Given the emphasis on the creation of original works in both the Commissioning and Legacy strands, it is as expected that both of these strands supported more artists than other staff. This latter point is also discussed later in this chapter.

Chart 4.10 Employment by Programme Strand



In terms of value for money achieved, the average grant per staff member (based on the Limerick City of Culture grant rather than the total project costs) was also examined. Chart 4.11 sets out the results of that examination. The highest average grant per staff member was €2,626 for the International strand followed by the Legacy strand at €1,178. Again, this is to be expected for the International strand as this strand accounted for the highest proportion of the overall funding on the cultural programme. In addition, both the International and Legacy strands saw almost 100% of their project costs met by Limerick City of Culture funding. The remaining strands – Commissioning, 'Made in Limerick' and Other – all saw average grants of between €460 and €615. These three strands also enjoyed a smaller proportion of project costs being met by the Limerick City of Culture ranging from approximately 50% of costs for Commissioning to approximately two thirds for 'Made in Limerick' and Other.

Chart 4.11 Average Limerick City of Culture grant per staff member



For future Cities of Culture, consideration should be given to finding a balance between supporting high value projects and supporting greater numbers of artists and other creative workers. The potential for some strands to generate high employment for relatively low average costs per individual should be given close consideration in the design of future cultural programmes.

In assessing the achievement of this objective, consideration was also given to the responses by funding recipients to a question on the effect of Limerick City of Culture on the profile of the creative sector in Limerick. The responses were overwhelmingly positive with 84% of respondents indicating that they thought the year had strengthened the profile of the creative sector in the City, with just 8% indicating no impact.

4.6. Original Works

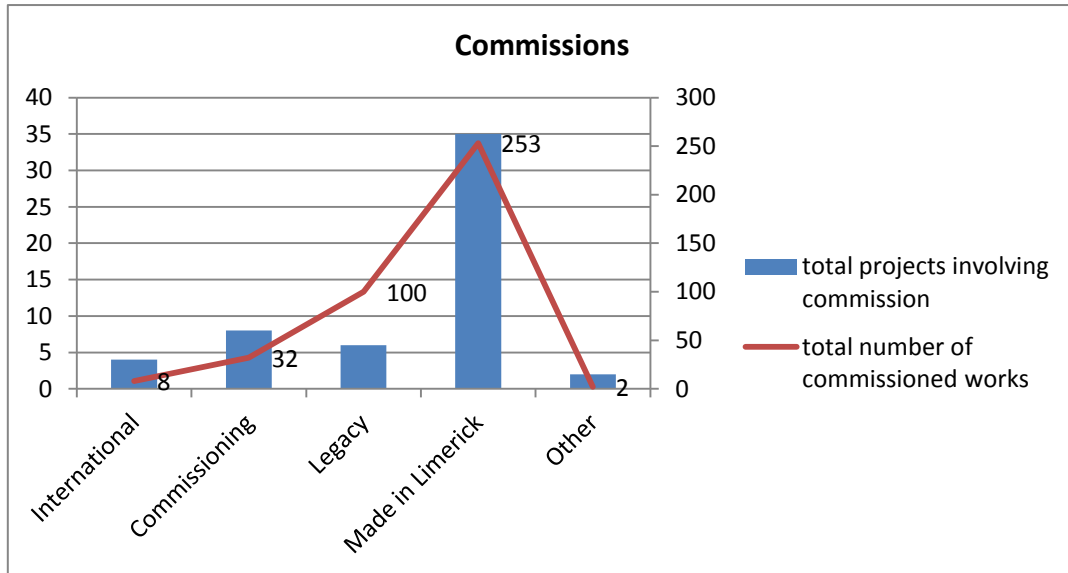
Another important measure of the success of the National City of Culture initiative is the number of original works commissioned as part of the year. For this, 137 of the projects supported provided information in their returns. Of the 137 projects, 56 of them involved a commission (40.88%). Of these, the total number of commissioned works was 395.

Given the different objectives for the individual strands of the cultural programme (discussed in section 4.1), it is interesting to examine the number of projects involving commissions and the number of commissioned works across the various strands. The Commissioning strand, in particular, emphasised the importance of offering opportunities to create and present new and/or innovative works.

Chart 4.12 sets out the number of projects involving commissions and the total number of commissioned works across each of the strands (the data labels relate to the number of commissioned works). The 'Made in Limerick' strand accounts for the highest number of projects with a commission (35) and also the highest number of commissioned works (253). This latter number is driven by a relatively small number of projects involving local communities e.g. the community archive created by 'From Limerick with Love' (69) and projects supporting local artists e.g. FABLAB which provided space for 25 local makers. Commissioning saw the next highest number of projects with commissions (9). As discussed in section 4.1, The Abbey Theatre's Sive and Sadler's Wells' Still Current were included in the Commissioning strand, but did not involve a new commission as the works had already been shown elsewhere. The Commissioning strand supported 32 individual commissions, although the majority of these (24) related to the Humberto Vélez visual arts project. It should be noted that, distinct from the 'Made in Limerick' strand, the Commissioning strand supported larger, high value commissions. Although not strictly speaking an objective of the Legacy strand, the chart shows a greater number of commissioned works (100) from a relatively small number of projects (6). The majority of these commissioned works come from three particular projects – the writer in residence (57), the Pigtown Fling (20) and the Horse Outside project (15). Finally, the smallest numbers of projects and commissions were found in the International and Other strands – this is due to the fact that the International stand favoured international artists and performances that were well established, while the Other strand included a number of festivals.

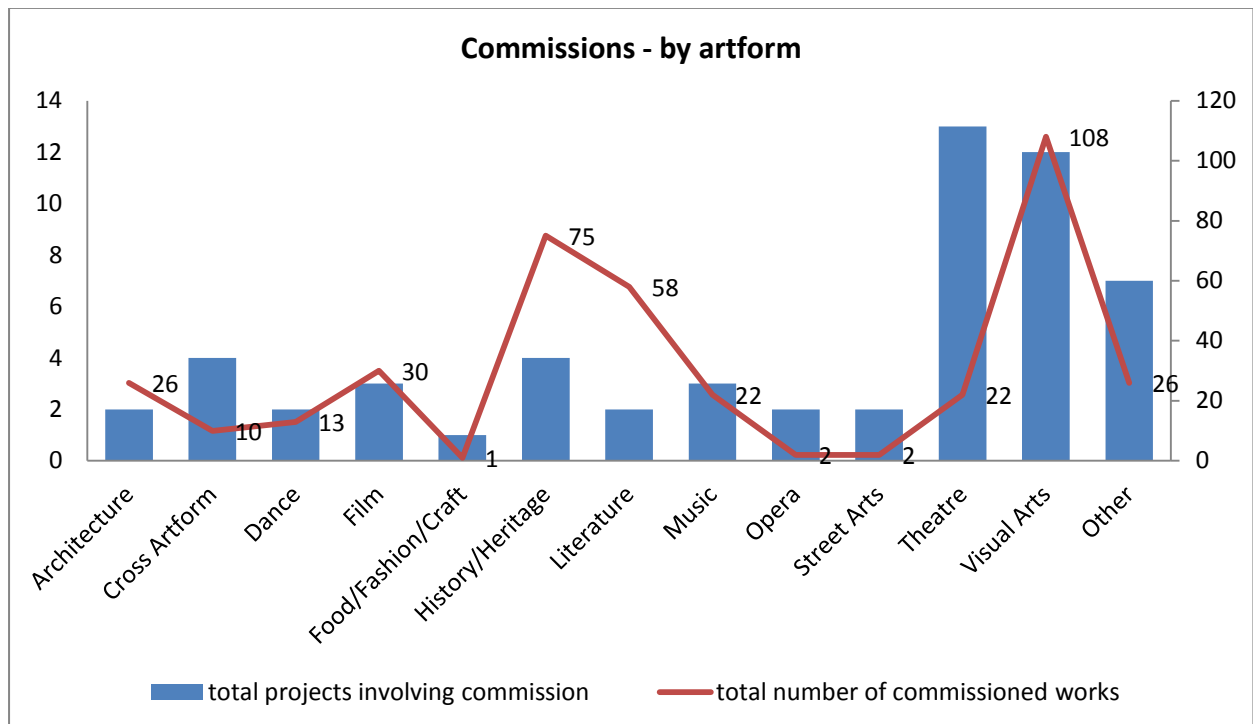
That said, it is noted that the Royal de Luxe was commissioned by the Limerick City of Culture and was one of the most publicised events of the year.

Chart 4.12 Projects with Commissions and Commissioned Works



It is also interesting to examine whether certain artforms benefitted more from commissions under the Limerick City of Culture. Chart 4.13 sets out the projects which included commissions (bar chart) and the number of commissions (line chart with data labels) broken down by individual artform.

Chart 4.13 Commissions by artform

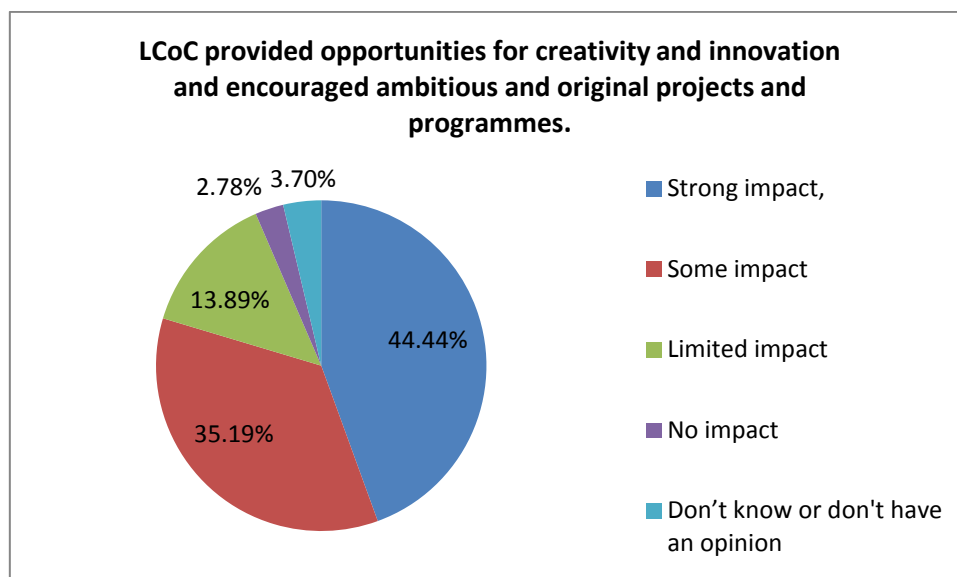


Theatre and visual arts had the highest number of projects which included commissions with 13 and 12 respectively, however, the number of actual commissions varied significantly from 22 for theatre to 108 for visual arts. This is a function of the challenge of commissioning new theatre works, given the scale and complexity of performance, relative to commissioning single works from individual artists. History/Heritage also enjoys a high number of commissions (75) although these are derived from small number of projects (4). As discussed earlier, some 68 of these were commissions included in the *From Limerick with Love* community archive project. Similar to History/Heritage, Film also saw relatively high numbers of commissions (30) from 3 projects. Again, the *Big City Portrait* accounts for the majority of these (27) as the project involved commissioning a range of interactive short films by different filmmakers. While there is evidence that Limerick City of Culture supported commissions in all artforms, with the exception of circus and sport, the majority of support was concentrated in a few areas – theatre, visual arts and other. Future Cities of Culture should seek to ensure opportunities for all artforms to benefit from funding for original works within the context of the overall cultural programme objectives.

4.7. Stakeholder Perspectives

The online survey of members of the public included a question to assess how well, or otherwise, members of the public considered that the Limerick City of Culture achieved its objective of fostering creativity and innovation. Chart 4.14 sets out the responses to that question, with a significant majority (79.63%) indicating that the City of Culture had a positive impact on this pillar. That said, over 15% indicated either a limited or negative impact on creativity and innovation, a finding which should be borne in mind in the design of future Cities of Culture programmes.

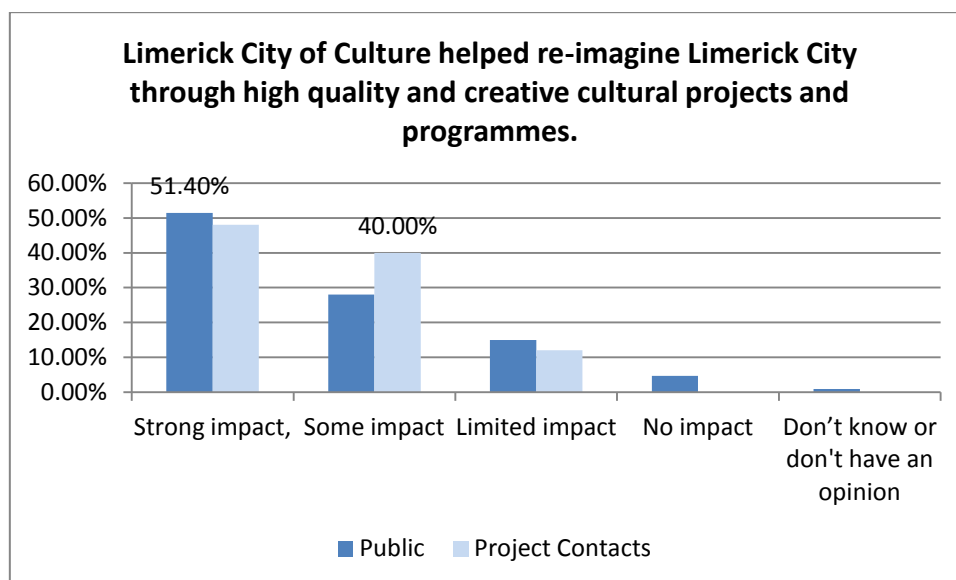
Chart 4.14 Stakeholder Perspectives: Creativity and Innovation



The same question was also put to funding recipients, who indicated overwhelming support for a strong impact (64%) and 32% indicating some impact. It is noteworthy that among this group there were no negative responses with just 4% indicating that they didn't know/had no opinion on the matter.

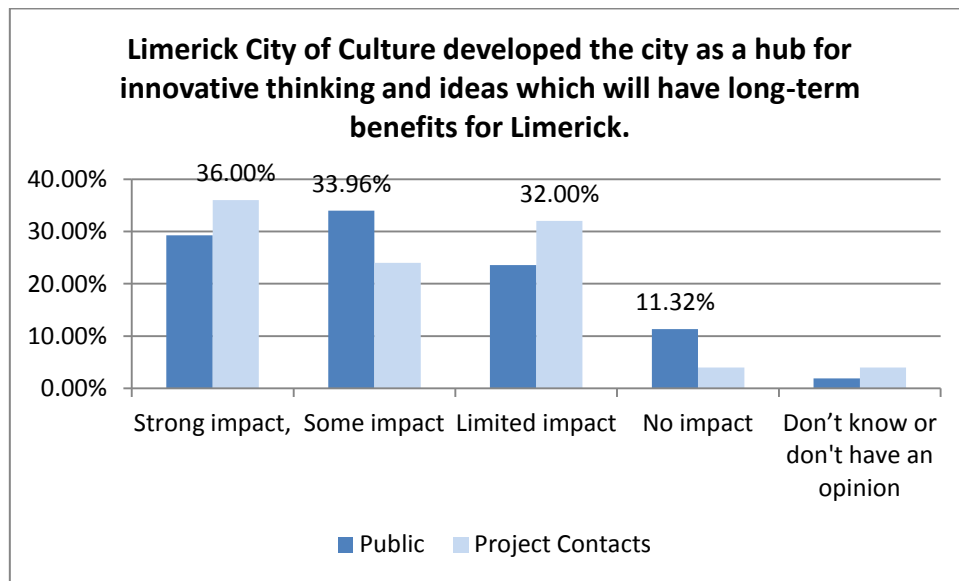
The surveys also sought to examine the perceptions of medium and long-term impacts on the city. In this regard, respondents were asked about the impact that they felt Limerick City of Culture had had on the ‘re-imagining’ of the city through high quality creative and cultural programmes. This ‘re-imagining’ was considered to be an important objective of the year of culture. The breakdown of responses by both the public and project contacts (funding recipients) are set out in chart 4.15. As with the previous finding, it is clear that public respondents are more likely to indicate a negative finding (limited or no impact) than funding recipients. Although not necessarily surprising, it is a factor in interpreting the data and something which should be addressed in future such surveys i.e. unsuccessful applicants should also be surveyed. That said, it is noted that a smaller proportion of funding recipients (48%) considered the year to have had a strong impact on the ‘re-imagining’ of the city than the public did (51.4%), while proportionately more funding recipients (40%) saw some impact relative to the public at (28%).

Chart 4.15 Stakeholder Perspectives: Re-imagining Limerick City



When asked about the impact of the year on the development of Limerick as a hub for innovative thinking (Chart 4.16), respondents were more negative in their responses, with fewer respondents (proportionally) indicating strong or some impact relative to previous questions. Respondents to the project contacts survey were more polarized than the public, with higher proportions indicating either a strong or a limited impact, while a greater proportion of the public indicated some impact. As with previous questions, the public respondents are more likely to indicate no impact than funding recipients. That said, for both groups, greater than 50% indicated either a strong or some impact, which is a positive outcome for the City of Culture.

Chart 4.16 Stakeholder Perspectives: Hub for innovative thinking



Chapter 5: Output Analysis – Access, Partnership & Connectivity

This chapter examines the outputs of the remaining objectives/pillars of the Limerick City of Culture identified in the evaluation framework (table 1.2), as follows:

- Creating opportunities for access to and participation in cultural activities;
- Supporting cultural partnerships and collaborations; and
- Creating opportunities for the Limerick cultural sector to connect with the wider world.

5.1. Access and Participation

This section addresses the outputs from the access and participation pillar. Limerick City of Culture elaborated on the *access and participation* objective as follows:

- *To work with the citizens of Limerick to create immersive, valuable quality creative projects that have access and participation at their core;*
- *To allow citizens to celebrate their own creativity;*
- *To develop programmes and activities which encourage visitors to choose Limerick as a destination for social and cultural activity;*
- *To reinvigorate Limerick City centre with cultural activity, making it a place to visit; and*
- *To re-imagine Limerick City through quality cultural and creative original projects and programmes.*

It is clear that many of the sub-objectives overlap with the objectives of the creativity and innovation and other pillars. However, the evaluation framework identifies three research indicators to measure the level of outputs associated with this objective, set out in table 5.1. These will be examined individually and in comparison with EU Capitals of Culture, where possible, in each of the following sub-sections.

Table 5.1 Research indicators for Access and Participation

Access and Participation	Attendance at LCoC events
	Number of projects and resulting attendances from disadvantaged communities, young people, or "culturally inactive" groups.
	Number of volunteers

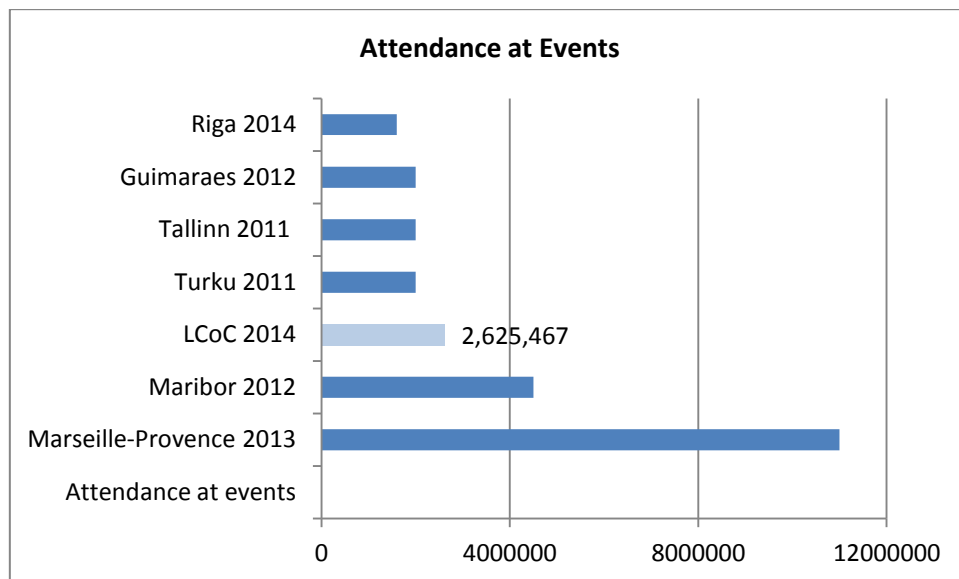
5.1.1. Attendance at Limerick City of Culture Events

Attendance is an important indicator of the success of the Limerick City of Culture year, demonstrating the level of access and participation by the community in the cultural life of the city during the year. In the online survey of members of the public, 78.6% of respondents indicated that they had attended more cultural events than they usually would have during the City of Culture year.

The City of Culture collected information on attendance, as a condition of funding, from projects supported by the initiative. Of the 156 projects which received support, information on attendance was provided by 120 funding recipients. The remaining 36 projects did not return attendance figures for a variety of reasons including the challenge of collecting data from installations in public places and from non-ticketed events.

Projects were requested to advise whether the data on attendance was based on actual or estimated figures. The 120 projects which reported on attendance indicated a total attendance of 2.625 million people. Chart 5.1 compares this performance by Limerick with a number of EU Capitals of Culture. The chart demonstrates that Limerick out-performed a number of EU Capitals of Culture, with the third highest attendance of the cities examined. It should be noted that the investment in the cultural programme and, perhaps more importantly, in marketing and communication for both Maribor and Marseille-Provence was significantly ahead of the investment by Limerick.

Chart 5.1 International Comparison: Attendance at Events



56 projects provided data on actual attendance at projects, with a total of 201,595 attendees. This accounts for an average of 3,600 attendees per project. Of the 64 projects that estimated attendance (2,423,827), the average attendance per project was over ten times higher at 37,873. This affected the overall average attendance per event indicating a high of 21,879 attendees per project.

While these figures are illustrative of the size of the audience for particular projects, for comparison purposes it is considered useful to examine the size of the audience by performance/event rather than by project, given that the number of performances/events varied between projects. Given the relatively large sample of projects with actual audience numbers (56) and the difference between the actual and estimated audiences, it was decided to focus on these for comparison purposes.

Of the 56 projects which provided details of their actual audiences, 54 also provided details of the number of performances/events. The average audience for these 54 projects was 509 people. This compares very favourably with the proxy national average of 146 per performance/event, based on Theatre Forum's annual *Audiences for the Performing Arts in Ireland* report for 2014. As outlined previously, the report presents a broad range of data derived from the box offices of 49 venues across the country. The report also provides average attendance for large and small venues of 312 and 116 respectively. Again, these figures are well below the average audience per performance/event in Limerick.

Looking at the data for actual audiences, table 5.2 presents the average audience per performance/event across each of the strands. Again, the information used is based on the actual audiences recorded by projects (n=56) rather than on the estimates of audience figures provided by the remaining projects which reported on audiences (n=64). The highest average audience was in the International strand (789). This is to be expected given the scale of the events in that strand, often held in larger venues e.g. University Concert Hall, the Culture Factory etc. Again, this average audience is higher than the proxy national average of 312 for large venues reported in the Theatre Forum report.

The next highest average audience figure was for "Made in Limerick" at 558. This figure is heavily influenced by a large outlier – Limerick Culture Garden reported an audience of 110,000. When this outlier is removed, the average audience for 'Made in Limerick' events is 128 which is more in line with the national average and the averages for the Commissioning and Legacy strands. Given the community nature of many of the projects supported under the 'Made in Limerick' strand, it is useful to compare the average to the proxy national average for small venues (116). Again, the comparison is favourable for this strand.

The average audience for the Commissioning strand was 116 which is somewhat lower than the proxy national average of 146. Of the four projects in this strand which reported on actual audience figures, three took place in the Lime Tree Theatre which has a capacity of 510, and as such is classified as a large venue. The average audience for these three projects was 127, which is less than half of the proxy average for large venues of 312.

The lowest average audience per performance/event, was recorded for the Legacy strand, however, this figure should be treated with caution as only one project in that strand reported on actual audience figures.

Table 5.2 Average Attendance by Programme Strand

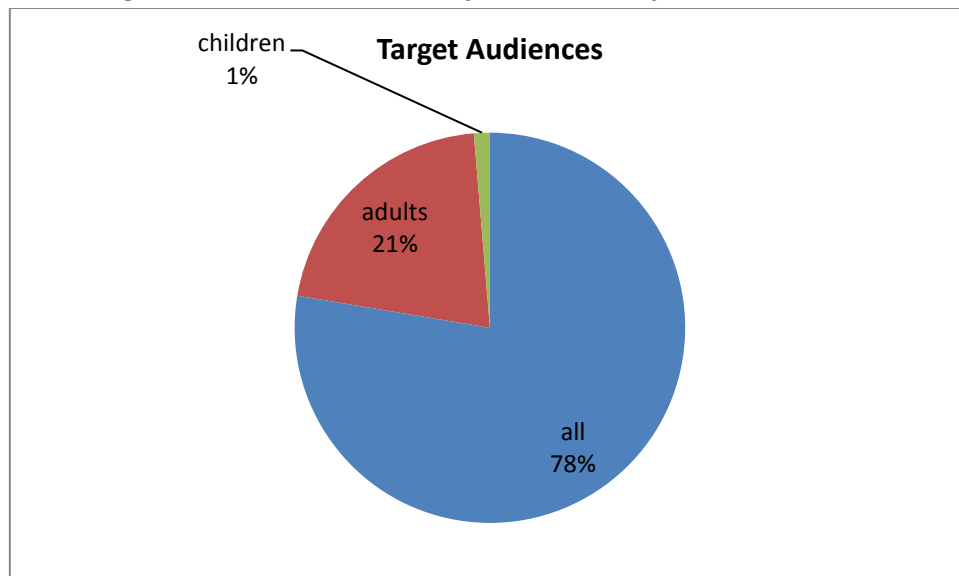
Programme Strand	Projects	Average attendance per performance/event
International	5	789
Commissioning	4	116
Legacy	1	75
'Made in Limerick'	44	558
Totals	54	

From the analysis, it would appear that in general the attendances for Limerick City of Culture events were higher than the proxy national average, across all sizes of venues. In addition, projects in the International and 'Made in Limerick' strands also performed well relative to the Theatre Forum averages. Due to the limited data available it is not possible to assess the performance of projects in the Legacy strand, however, it is noted that the Commissioning strand performed less well than the proxy national averages. This may be due to the objective of the Commissioning strand to produce new and innovative works which may have less audience appeal than more mainstream artistic offerings. Future Cities of Culture should take this into account in choosing venues, with consideration being given to both expected audiences and venue capacity.

5.1.2. Attendance by group –disadvantaged communities, young people and others

Limerick City of Culture collected information from projects on target audiences as well as more detailed information on youth, community and diversity within the projects. Chart 5.2 presents a breakdown of the target audiences reported by 152 of the 156 projects supported by Limerick City of Culture. The majority of the projects had a general audience, while 21% indicated a specific audience of adults, while 1% indicated that the target audience was children.

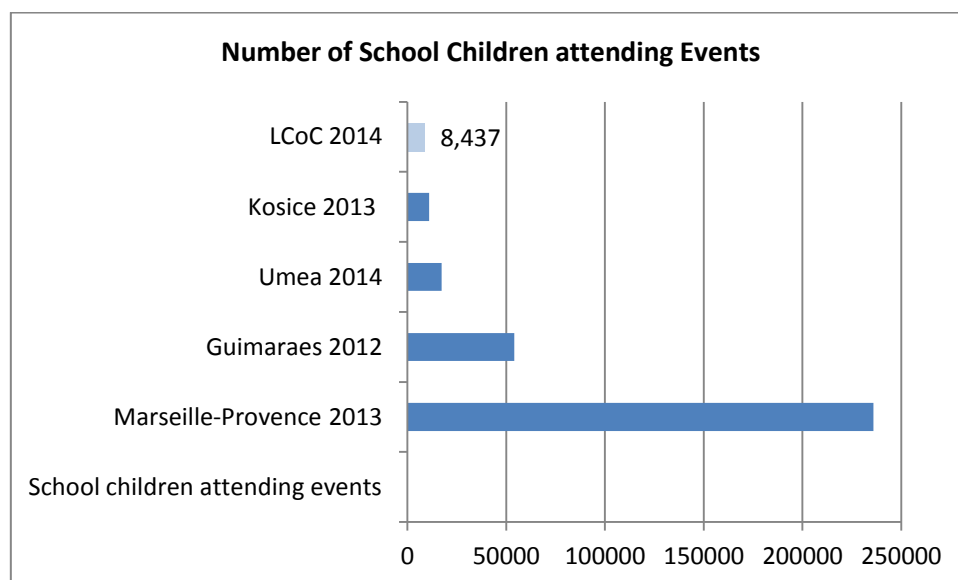
Chart 5.2 Target Audiences – Limerick City of Culture Projects



Although the 1% figure for projects targeting children appears small, a much higher proportion of projects (46%) reported that specific elements of the project were targeted at children or young people. Again, Limerick demonstrates a mid-table performance when compared with the EU Capitals of Culture experience (for which the information was provided in only two of the cities examined), with Turku recording just 19% of projects targeted at children and young people and Riga reporting a figure of 55%.

Of the 71 projects which indicated a specific element or elements targeting young people and children, 42 indicated that they had engaged with children and young people in school settings. The involvement of local schools in the organisation and delivery of events was identified as an important principle underpinning the City of Culture designation. In all, schools were engaged with on 251 occasions, with 727 workshops being delivered in the school setting over the period. The total number of children and young people involved in school settings was reported to be 8,437. It should be noted that no data is available for the numbers of children and young people involved in projects delivered outside of the school setting which may have impacted on the results for the international comparison (set out in chart 5.3). As may be seen from the Chart, Limerick demonstrated the lowest level of school children attending events compared to four EU Capitals of Culture. Future Cities of Culture should ensure that these data are also collected to ensure a comprehensive view of the engagement with particular groups.

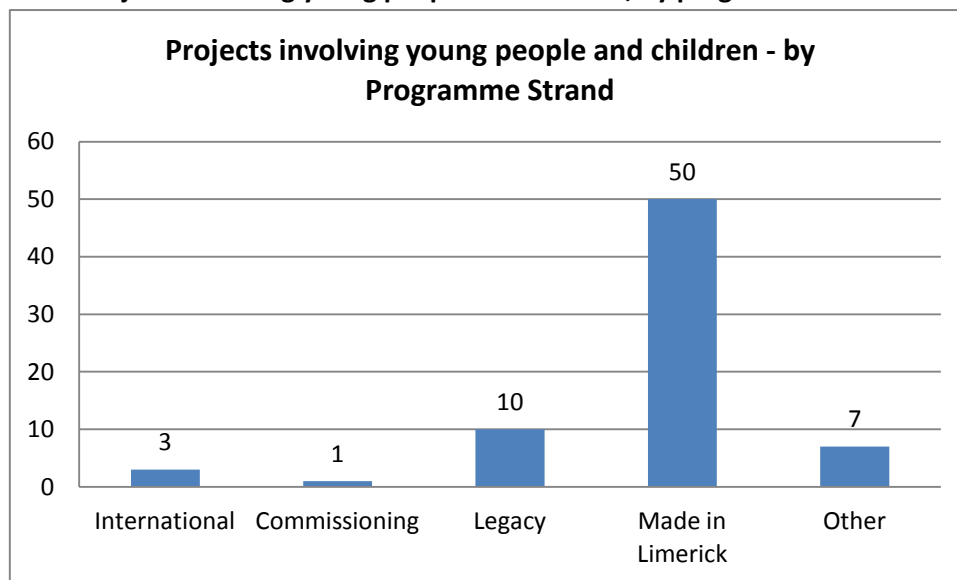
Chart 5.3 International Comparison: Attendance by School Children



When broken down by programme strand in chart 5.4, it is clear that the majority of projects involving young people and children were in the 'Made in Limerick' strand (50) followed by the Legacy strand (10). The number of legacy projects is significant given that only 13 projects were included in this category. Two legacy projects in particular generated significant participation opportunities for children/youth – the Limerick Craft Hub and the Horse Outside project. The Other category also saw a large proportion of its projects with elements aimed at children and young

people, due to the inclusion of a number of free public events including the Special Olympics opening ceremony and the Christmas lights. Commissioning and International saw the least number and lowest proportion of projects aimed at children and young people.

Chart 5.4 Projects involving young people and children, by programme strand



Limerick City of Culture also collected information on projects aimed at promoting access and participation in the arts and culture within communities. The numbers of projects reporting engagement with communities was less than for children and young people, as follows:

- 49 projects reported having community participants;
- 41 projects reported holding community workshops; and
- 24 projects reported including training in participatory practices as part of the project.

Overall, the 49 projects which provided information on community activities engaged with 216,813 participants and saw 904 workshops delivered over the course of the year. By programme strand, a similar trend is noted to that identified in chart 5.2, in that the vast majority of projects (44) involving a community element were in the ‘Made in Limerick’ strand. This is undoubtedly a function of the fact that the majority of projects supported under the cultural programme were under the ‘Made in Limerick’ strand. That said, on a proportional basis, projects across the rest of the programme strands were less likely to include a community element than an element targeting children and young people; International (2), Commissioning (2), Legacy (4) and Other (1).

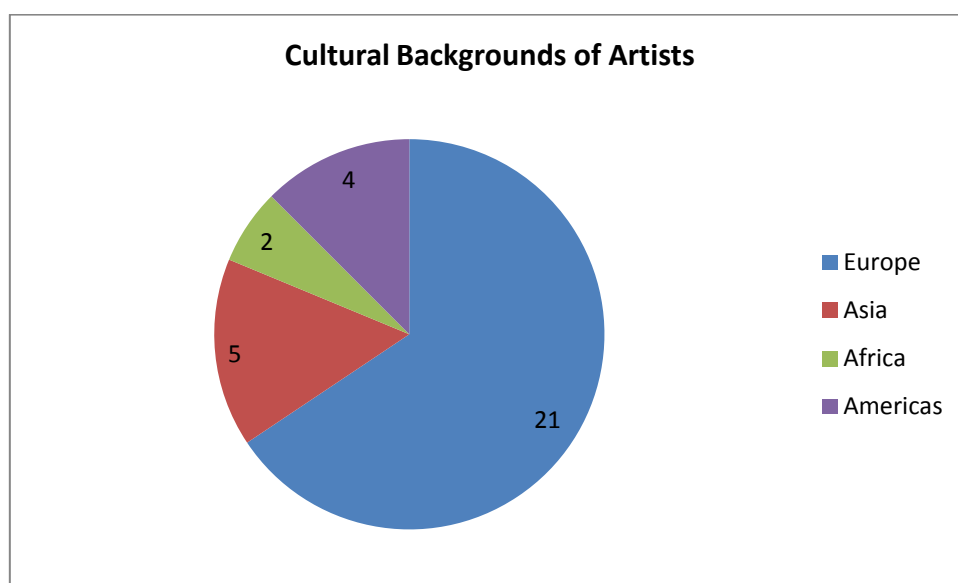
Limerick City of Culture sought information on cultural diversity, as an element of projects as well as in terms of the cultural backgrounds of artists and participants in the projects. 62 projects reported that cultural diversity was part of the project, broken down by programme strand as follows:

- International – 7 projects;
- Commissioning – 2 projects;
- Legacy – 5 projects;
- ‘Made in Limerick’ – 43 projects; and
- Other – 5 projects.

It is somewhat surprising that only 7 of the International projects considered cultural diversity as part of the project, given that part of the objective of the strand was to broaden artistic and cultural experience. That said, the 7 projects represent over half of the projects in the strand.

Information on the cultural backgrounds of artists among these 62 projects was also provided (although not in all cases), with artists from 32 separate countries being identified. It should be noted, that in a number of cases individual countries were not identified, but rather the project noted that the artists were from Africa, South America, Asia or Europe. Chart 5.5 summarises the countries of origin for the projects in question. The majority are from Europe, followed by Asia (including Australia), North and South America and Africa.

Chart 5.5 Cultural Backgrounds of Artists



Limerick City of Culture also sought information from all projects on whether the project reached different national, ethnic or cultural audiences. 75 projects reported that they did reach different audiences – ranging from audiences including young people, older people, culturally inactive people, religious groups as well as a wide variety of different nationalities. A number of projects also noted that their project was highlighted nationally as well as within Limerick. Again, looking at the performance by strand:

- International – 11 projects;
- Commissioning – 3 projects;
- Legacy – 7 projects;
- ‘Made in Limerick’ – 47 projects; and
- Other – 7 projects.

The International strand saw 100% of its projects reporting that they reached different audiences, while just under 50% of ‘Made in Limerick’ projects reported reaching different audiences. Both the Legacy and Other strands also demonstrated strong performances, while Commissioning saw only 3 projects (less than one third) reporting reaching different audiences. Given the value of the

Commissioning strand to both the cultural community in Limerick and its importance for the overall cultural programme, this latter finding is somewhat disappointing. That said, there may have been some underreporting on performance on this element of the City of Culture’s post project questionnaire.

5.1.3. *Volunteers*

Limerick City of Culture sought volunteers for overall delivery of the cultural programme, while individual projects also secured help from volunteers. This section looks at the volunteering trends for both sets of volunteers using information sourced from Volunteer Ireland, who were contracted to source and manage a team of volunteers by Limerick City of Culture, as well as data collected from the individual projects.

The Limerick City of Culture Volunteer programme was managed by Volunteer Ireland on behalf of the City of Culture. Volunteer Ireland ran the programme from April 2014, beginning with a recruitment campaign involving a number of different strands – social media, newsletter, listing on national volunteering database, media engagement as well as direct engagement with universities, local companies etc. This recruitment yielded 392 volunteer applications, of which 318 were considered to be ‘live’ applications. The volunteers were provided with both general volunteer training and event specific training. In all, 209 volunteers supported four Limerick City of Culture projects as set out in table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Limerick City of Culture – Volunteering Outputs

Volunteers LCoC	Programme Strand	No. of Volunteers	No. of Events/Days	Hours
No Fit State	International	40	10	532
Proms in the Park	International	36	1	180
Royal de Luxe	International	117	3	2799
Culture Night	Other	16	1	96
Total		209	15	3607

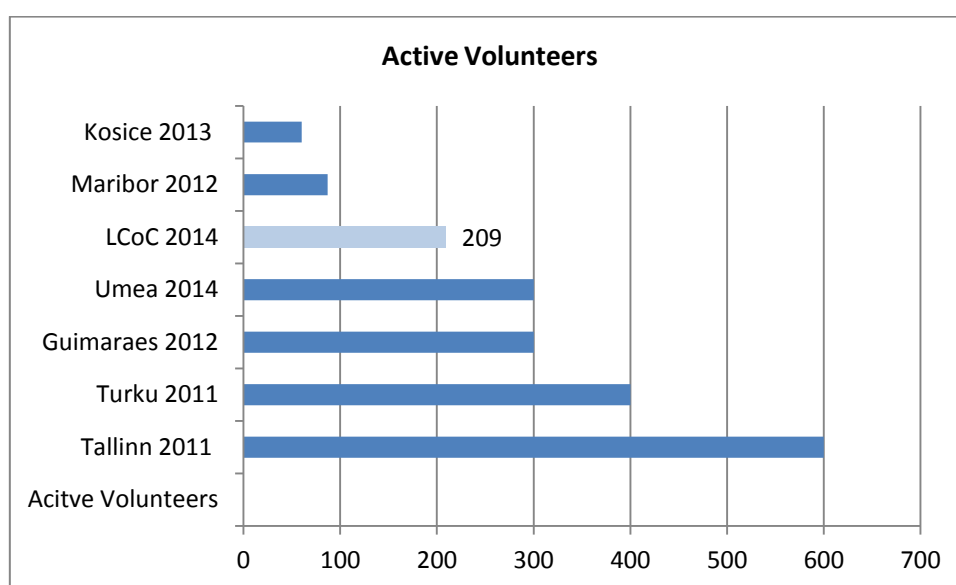
Given the scale of the Royal de Luxe, it is not surprising that this project saw the highest number of volunteers and hours worked. In all, the volunteers worked an estimated 3,607 hours, or 17.3 hours per person. The value of this volunteering is estimated using the minimum wage rate for Ireland (in 2014) of €8.65 per hour or €31,200. This does not include the additional hours for training which the volunteers also contributed.

Volunteer Ireland managed the volunteer programme from April 2014, and provided this service over 63 days, with additional support from an intern at a cost of €31,287. This yielded 3.3 active volunteers per day which appears quite low given the resources required, and did not generate additional value from the volunteers after the cost of the contract is subtracted. In addition, it is noted that the New Year’s Eve project (International strand) generated 120 volunteers without the support of a specialist programme manager. That said, the Volunteer Ireland report on the outputs of the contract indicated that it had delivered a full complement of volunteers for all the required events. Accordingly, it is considered that Limerick City of Culture should review the level of ambition

of the contract (for just four events) and the requirement for a defined level of outputs e.g. numbers of volunteers and other performance indicators.

Chart 5.6 compares the performance of Limerick City of Culture with a number of EU Capitals of Culture. Limerick’s performance is on the lower end of the scale, ahead of just Kosice and Maribor which both had fewer than 100 active volunteers. While this may be a function of the limited success of the volunteering programme for the City of Culture, it should also be borne in mind that this figure relates only to volunteers directly sourced by the organisation. As the following paragraphs will demonstrate the actual figure for volunteers engaged in all aspects of the cultural programme was much higher than 209.

Chart 5.6 International Comparison: Active Volunteers

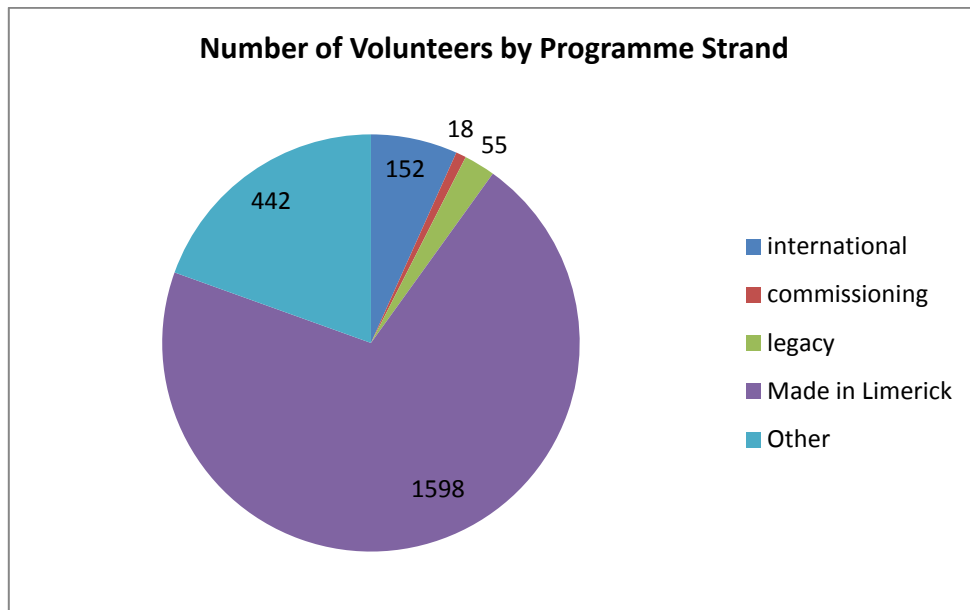


In addition to the 209 volunteers that were sourced directly by Limerick City of Culture, the projects themselves also noted significant numbers of volunteers. Of the 156 projects, 132 provided information on the numbers, if any, of volunteers that supported the project’s delivery. In all 105 projects reported having volunteers, while 27 indicated no volunteers. The total number of volunteers for the 105 projects was 2,265, broken down by programme strand in chart 5.7. The average number of volunteers per project was 17, however the median was lower at 8 volunteers per project. Only three projects recorded volunteer numbers of 100 or more, while 94 projects had fewer than 20 volunteers.

As expected, the strand with the highest number of projects (‘Made in Limerick’) also had the highest number of volunteers (1,598). However, the Other strand also generated a significant number of volunteers (442) due primarily to the high numbers of volunteers involved in the Special Olympics Opening Ceremony (300) and the New Year’s Eve event (120). Although the numbers of volunteers in the International strand appears quite low at 152, it should be noted that these figures do not include the volunteers sourced directly for Limerick City of Culture (set out in table 5.3).

Legacy and Commissioning both saw low levels of volunteering, due to the smaller scale of many of the projects and their artist-led nature.

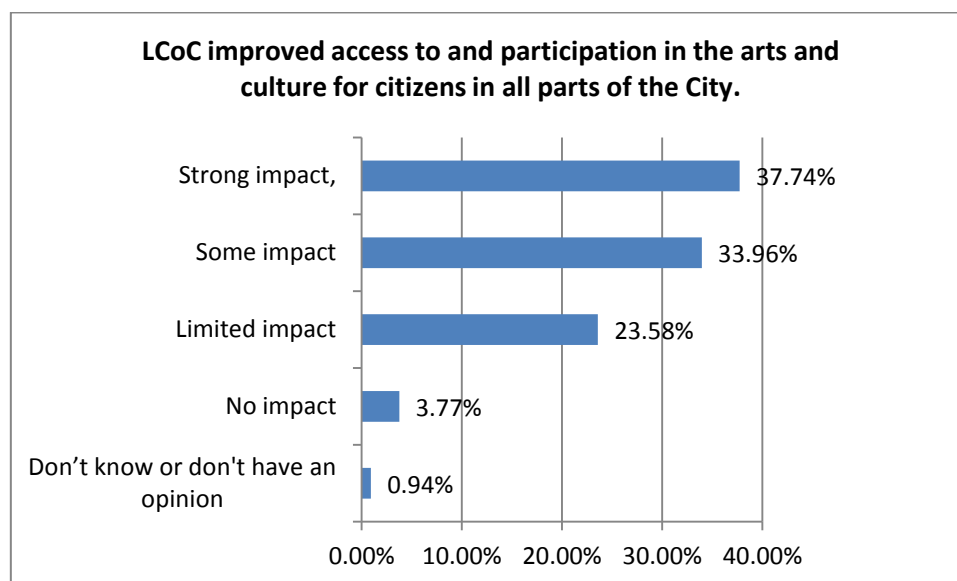
Chart 5.7 **Volunteers by Programme Strand**



5.1.4. *Stakeholder Perspectives: Access and Participation*

The public survey also included a question to assess how well, or otherwise, members of the public considered that the Limerick City of Culture achieved its objective of supporting greater levels of access to and participation in cultural activities. Chart 5.8 sets out the responses to that question, with a significant majority (71.7%) indicating that the City of Culture had a positive impact on this pillar. That said, almost 30% indicated either a limited or negative impact on access and participation. This finding should be taken into consideration at the design stage for future City of Culture programmes. This finding is also somewhat qualified by the fact that 78.6% of respondents indicated that they had attended more cultural events than they usually would have during the City of Culture year.

Chart 5.8 Stakeholder Perspectives: Access & Participation



Project contacts (funding recipients) as providers of arts and cultural opportunities were also asked for their views on the impact of the City of Culture on access and participation. As may be expected (given their provider status), greater proportions of this group indicated strong (44%) and some (40%) impacts. Only 16% indicated a limited impact, with no negative or neutral responses.

5.2. Partnership and Collaboration

This section addresses the outputs from the partnership and collaboration pillar. Limerick City of Culture elaborated on the *partnership and collaboration* objective as follows:

- *To ensure that programmes and projects are collaborative in nature and support partnerships between local, national and international groups/agencies;*
- *To develop programmes that encourage local partnerships across the city and its environs;*
- *To develop the city as a hub for inspirational thinking and ideas and to create programmes, projects and dialogues that can have a use and purpose for citizens beyond the year 2014.*

It is clear that many of the sub-objectives overlap with the objectives of the other pillars. However, the evaluation framework identifies five research indicators to measure the level of outputs associated with this objective, set out in table 5.4. These will be examined individually and in comparison with EU Capitals of Culture in the following sub-sections, with the exception of the indicator relating to the number and level of private sector contributions which was examined in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.2).

Table 5.4 Research indicators for Partnership and Collaboration

Partnership and Collaboration	Value (financial) of investment in cultural infrastructure, sites and facilities
	Number and level of private sector contributions
	Number of new artistic collaborations established
	Development of a strategy for long-term cultural development of the city

5.2.1. *Value of investment in cultural infrastructure*

Limerick City of Culture invested in the city’s cultural infrastructure in two main ways; by a direct investment in the culture factory venue and indirectly through its cultural programme.

The Culture Factory is a 365,000 square foot former industrial building, located in the National Technology Park in Plassey, Co. Limerick. It was rented and upgraded by Limerick City of Culture to act as a venue for a number of flagship events during the Limerick City of Culture year. The cost to the City of Culture of renting and managing the venue was €370,926, while €293,811 was invested in modifying the building for use as a venue, as well as the ongoing maintenance of the venue over the year. The venue hosted two major events from the International strand over the course of the year; Fuerza Bruta! and No Fit State with a total of 15 performances (March) and 10 performances (June) respectively. Given the total investment of €664,737 in the venue, the average cost per performance was €26,589 which appears high but should be considered in the context of positive reviews in the media and online, both of the performances and use of the space¹⁵. In addition, the venue was used for other functions during the year e.g. film shoots, as a rehearsal space including for the preparation of the Royal de Luxe (Granny) project as well as for set building and storage which would bring down the average usage cost.

It should also be noted that the City of Culture was successful in showcasing the cultural potential of the venue and it has since been purchased by Limerick City and County Council to be leased (on a long-term basis) to Troy Studios. Troy Studios have indicated their intention to develop the venue into a large-scale studio facility to cater for film and TV productions in 2016. The project is currently going through a Part 8 planning application process. While the final outcome for this venue is undoubtedly positive, future Cities of Culture should ensure that a formal appraisal process is undertaken prior to the investment, supported by a full schedule of events and usage for the year.

The City of Culture also invested €394,000 in Limerick’s cultural infrastructure through 12 projects supported within the cultural programme. This accounts for 7.7% of all projects supported under

¹⁵ From the Irish Times: <http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/stage/limerick-s-city-of-culture-the-critical-take-1.2035579>,

From the Irish Examiner: <http://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/artsfilmtv/artsvibe/thrilling-argentinian-spectacle-at-limerick-city-of-culture-261493.html>,

From a blogging site: <http://bocktherobber.com/2014/03/fuerza-bruta-in-limericks-culture-factory/>

the programme, which may be acceptable given the existing substantial cultural infrastructure in the city including a Concert Hall, a number of theatres, museums etc. The investment is broken down as follows:

- Two permanent installations: Limerick Culture Garden and the Limerick QR Tour Walking Trail;
- Three temporary performance/exhibition spaces: the Culture Night Marquee, the Exhibition Venue for Eva International (Cleeves Factory) and the Pop Up Museum at 4 Rutland Street; and
- Six permanent rehearsal/performance/makers spaces: the Central Buildings Community Project, FABLAB, Limerick Craft Hub Ltd., Music Generation Bus, Ormston House, and the Theatre Shop at the Park Kiosk.

It should be noted that the full cost of the project may not have been invested in the cultural infrastructure especially in relation to the temporary performance and exhibition spaces e.g. the Culture Night Marquee. In addition, this list may not be exhaustive with other projects also including cultural infrastructural investment as part of the project e.g. temporary exhibition materials etc.

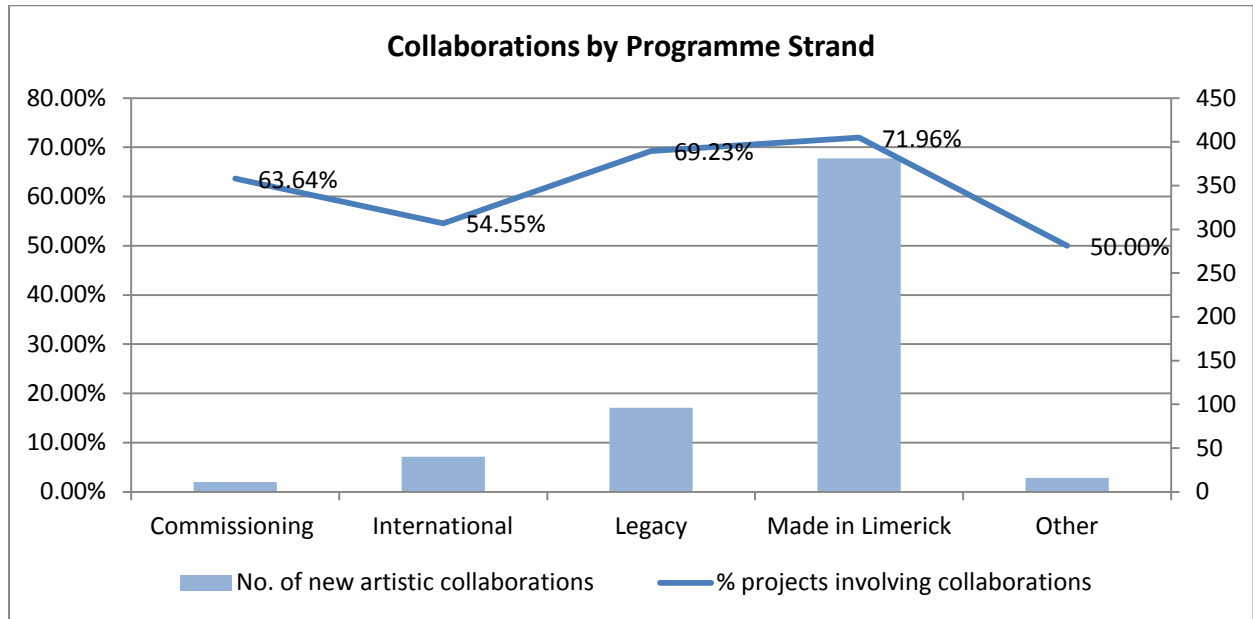
5.2.2. *Artistic Collaborations*

An important aspect of the City of Culture initiative, as with the EU Capitals of Culture, is the potential to generate opportunities for artists to collaborate and build artistic networks. To that end, the City of Culture sought information on artistic collaborations between Limerick artists, Irish artists and with international artists. Artists were defined as any creative personnel including stage, lighting, sound engineers etc. Funding recipients for 145 projects provided general information on whether or not artistic collaborations took place, while 132 of these provided additional details on the nature of the collaborations.

Of the responses received, over two thirds (105 projects) indicated that the project involved some type of artistic collaboration. Of these, there were 544 reported new collaborations – 333 involved Limerick artists, 152 Irish artists, and 132 with international artists. It is noted that collaborations may involve a combination of Limerick, Irish and international artists.

Chart 5.9 provides a breakdown of the level of projects with collaborations, as well as the number of collaborations supported by each programme strand. From an examination of the individual programme strands, 'Made in Limerick' had the highest proportion of projects involving collaborations (72%) as well as creating the highest number of collaborations (381). That said, all strands achieved levels of collaboration (in terms of project numbers) above 50%. Legacy projects involved the next highest number of collaborations (96), followed by International (40) with both Other and Commissioning strands yielding 16 and 11 collaborations respectively.

Chart 5.9 Artistic collaborations by programme strand



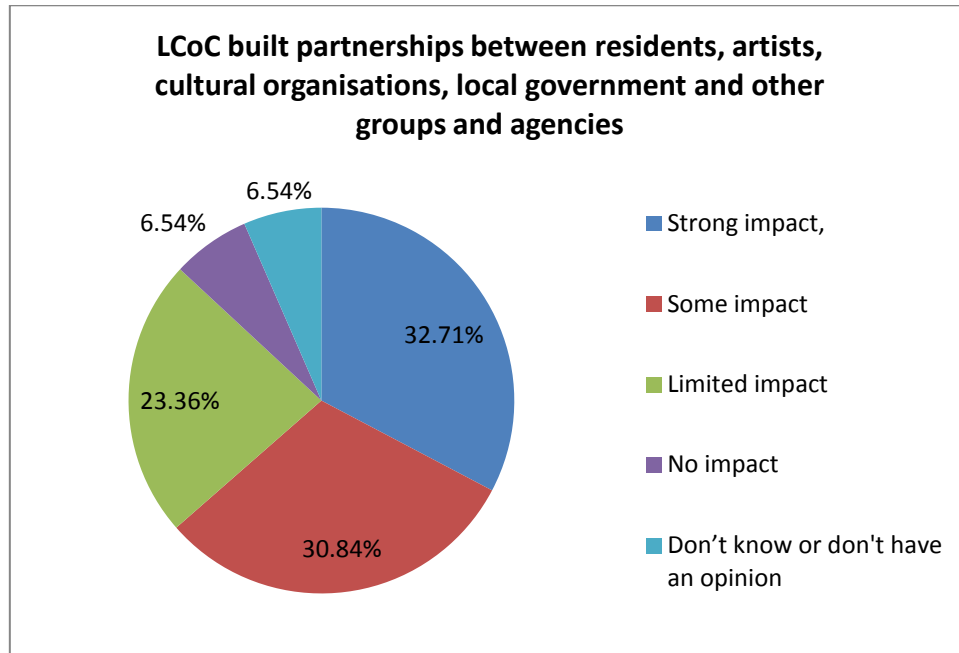
5.2.3. *Long-Term Strategy*

Limerick City of Culture did not develop a specific strategy for the long-term cultural development of the city. This was, however, due to the announcement of the bid process for the EU Capital of Culture in 2020. The company has rebranded itself as Limerick 2020 and has prepared a formal bid for the 2020 year which incorporates cultural development up to and beyond 2020. As this process is still underway, it is not possible to assess the quality or validity of this strategy as part of this evaluation.

5.2.4. *Stakeholder Perspectives*

Looking at how stakeholders viewed Limerick City of Culture’s ability to build partnerships and encourage collaboration, Chart 5.10 shows a relatively even division between the members of the public group that considered that the year had a strong impact (32.71%), those which saw some impact (30.84%) and those that saw limited or no impact (29.9%). As partnership and collaboration was one of the four pillars of the cultural programme, this latter result is somewhat disappointing and should be examined further to assess where deficits in opportunities or perceived opportunities may have arisen.

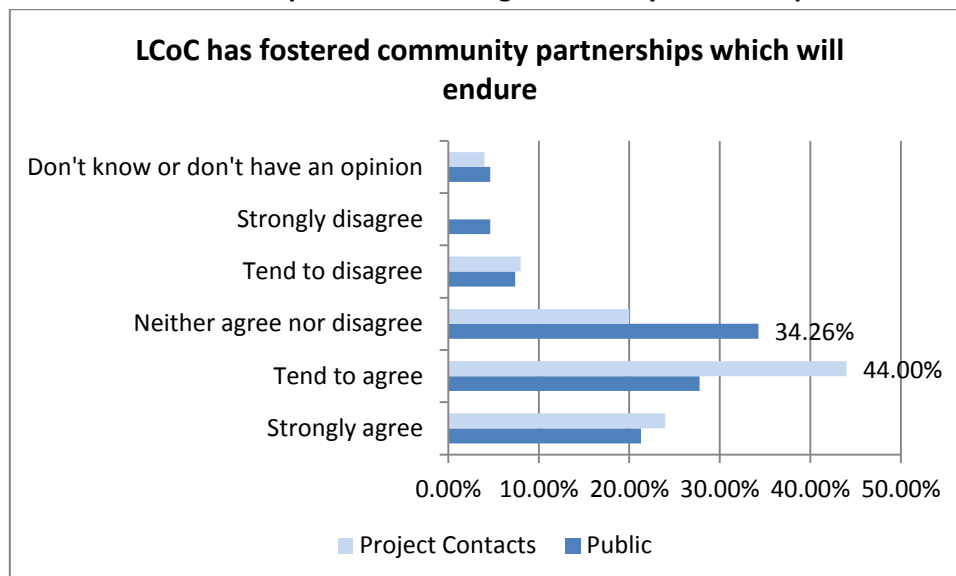
Chart 5.10 Stakeholder Perspectives: Building Partnerships



When the project contacts group (funding recipients) were asked about the impact of Limerick City of Culture on building local partnerships, a greater proportion (44%) indicated that the year had a strong impact. More funding recipients also indicated some impact (36%), relative to the public group. On the negative end of the scale, fewer funding recipients indicated a limited impact (16%) than the public group with no respondents indicating no impact. Just 4% had no opinion. Given the direct involvement of many of the project contacts in local partnerships, relative to the general public, during the City of Culture year, these findings are to be expected.

The generally positive perception of partnership building in the previous question is somewhat borne out in a further question on the legacy of the City of Culture year. The responses to the question, whether Limerick City of Culture fostered enduring community partnerships, are set out for both the public and project contacts groups in Chart 5.11. For the public, only 49% of respondents indicated that they thought it had (a decrease on the more positive findings for previous questions) while 68% of funding recipients considered there to be a likely legacy impact. A significant 34% of public respondents had a neutral position, which may suggest a lack of personal involvement in community projects during the year. This figure remains significant in the project contacts group (20%) and the two findings together may indicate some uncertainty about the future of the partnerships created. That said, only 12% of public respondents and 8% of project contacts indicated that they did not think the year fostered enduring community partnerships.

Chart 5.11 Stakeholder Perspectives: Enduring Community Partnerships



5.3. Passport and Connectivity

This section addresses the outputs from the passport and connectivity pillar. Limerick City of Culture elaborated on the *partnership and collaboration* objective as follows:

- *To provide opportunities for the export of Limerick Cultural Product;*
- *To ensure Limerick takes its place on the National and International stage;*
- *To forge and sustain links between Limerick and international cultural providers; and*
- *To develop Limerick cultural providers as Irish cultural ambassadors.*

To assess the achievement of these sub-objectives, the evaluation framework identifies five research indicators to measure the level of outputs associated with this objective, set out in table 5.5. These will be examined individually and in comparison with EU Capitals of Culture in each of the following sub-sections, with the exception of the indicator relating to the number of international events and collaborations which were examined in Chapter 4 (section 4.2) and this chapter (section 5.2.2) respectively.

Table 5.5 Research indicators for Passport and Connectivity

Passport and Connectivity	Increase in tourist visits
	Change in visitor spend
	Tone and level of media coverage of city and LCoC
	Measurement of any change in the image of the city - among residents, visitors, nationally
	Measurement of awareness of and attitude to LCoC among residents and visitors
	Total number of international events, collaborations etc.

5.3.1. *Tourism*

An important output of the National City of Culture designation is the potential for positively impacting on tourism in the area. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the analysis in this section is limited by the availability of data for Limerick City. To minimise this difficulty the evaluation has examined information relating to the Shannon area prepared by Fáilte Ireland on the basis that Limerick City is the largest urban centre in the area, and as such will garner a substantial portion of total visitors. The region also includes Clare, Limerick county, Offaly (west) and Tipperary (north).

In terms of generating international interest in the city as a cultural destination, Limerick City of Culture worked with Tourism Ireland to promote Limerick as a cultural and historical destination through a range of actions, as follows:

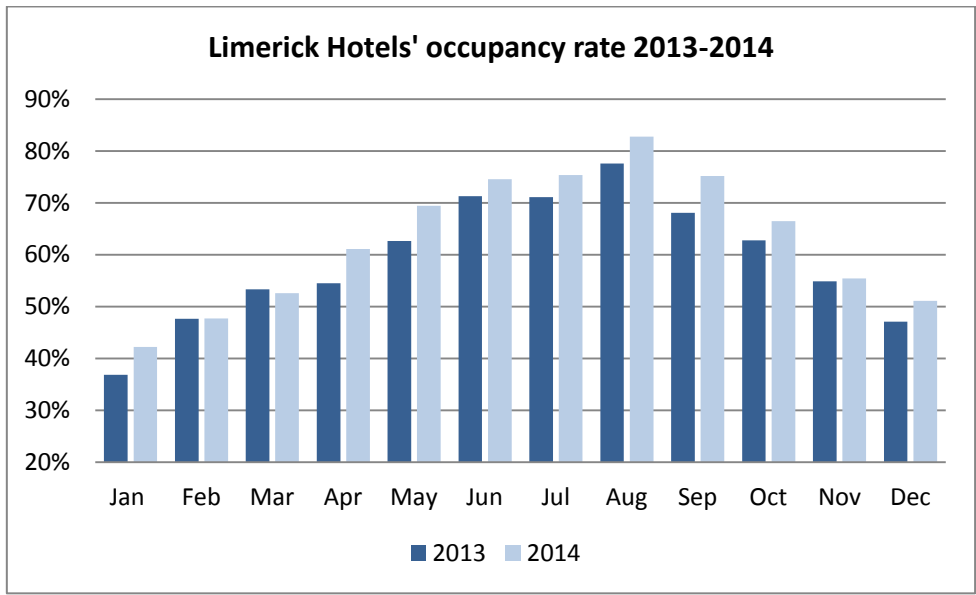
- A meeting of the Tourism Ireland Board in Limerick;
- Cooperative advertising campaigns between Tourism Ireland and its airlines operating in North America to highlight the City of Culture year e.g. Aer Lingus, Delta etc.;
- Launches of the City of Culture initiative in key markets e.g. at the Irish Embassy in London; and
- The production of an online film highlighting Limerick's designation as the National City of Culture in May 2014. The film showcased many of the city's cultural and historic landmarks, as well as featuring a number of events in the cultural programme e.g. Fuerza Bruta!, Carmen and Riverfest. The film was published on the Tourism Ireland website (Ireland.com) and shared through the organisation's social media network.

Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Facts for 2014 show significant increases in the levels of overseas visitors into the Shannon area. Overseas visitors saw an increase of 15.7% to 1,077,000 in 2014 with a total revenue of €326.2 million (an increase of 30% on the previous year's revenue). Visitors from Northern Ireland also increased by a significant 88% from 42,000 to 79,000 generating revenue of €20.4 million for the region.

In terms of domestic tourism, Fáilte Ireland has published data showing an increase (on 2013) in domestic tourism to the Shannon area from 567,000 (8%) of all domestic holidays in 2013 to 662,000 (9%) in 2014. However, the percentage of all domestic holiday nights spent in the region decreased from 10% in 2013 to 9% in 2014, which suggests that visitors were staying for shorter periods in the region, although they were spending more as the percentage expenditure by region increased from €96.12 million (7%) to €117.12 million (8%) in the year.

These figures, however, are not specific to Limerick City. Limerick City of Culture commissioned an economic impact assessment of the initiative (undertaken by Grant Thornton) which provided more detailed information on hotel occupancy over the City of Culture year. The report notes that Limerick's annual hotel occupancy rate of 63.7% compared well with the national average of 64%, while recognising that the year on year increase of 7% was higher than the national average. Although the report notes a correlation between months of higher occupancy in the city and the flagship events (chart 5.12), this was not always the case e.g. occupancy rates decreased year-on-year for March when Fuerza Bruta! was performed.

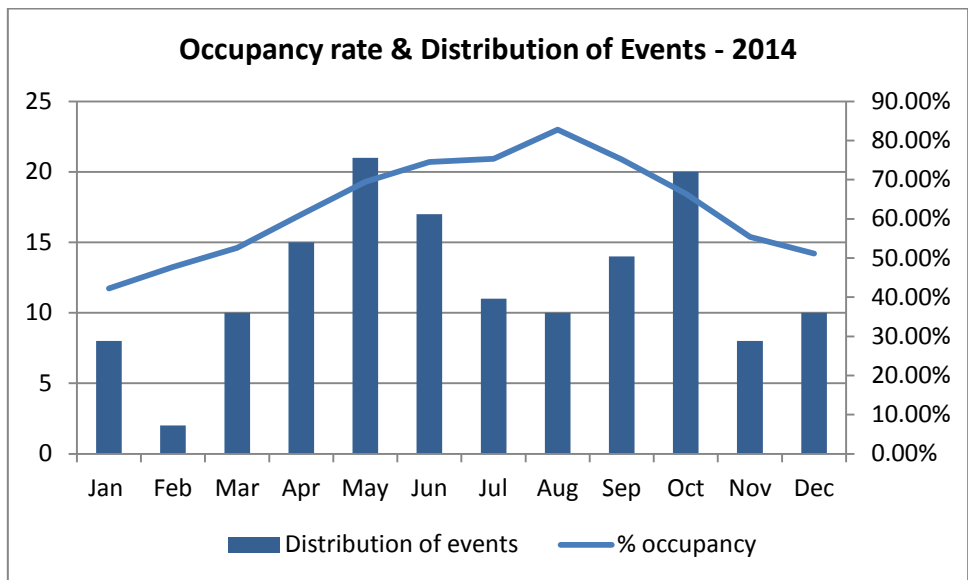
Chart 5.12 Limerick Hotels' occupancy rate 2013-2014



Source: *Limerick National City of Culture 2014 - Economic Impact Assessment*, Grant Thornton (2015)

In addition, when percentage occupancy for 2014 is compared with the distribution of all events over the City of Culture year (chart 5.13), there is no correlation between higher occupancy rates and peaks in the numbers of City of Culture events underway. Rather the distribution appears to follow typical holiday patterns rising to peak in August and declining thereafter.

Chart 5.13 Limerick Hotels' Occupancy & Distribution of Events (2014)



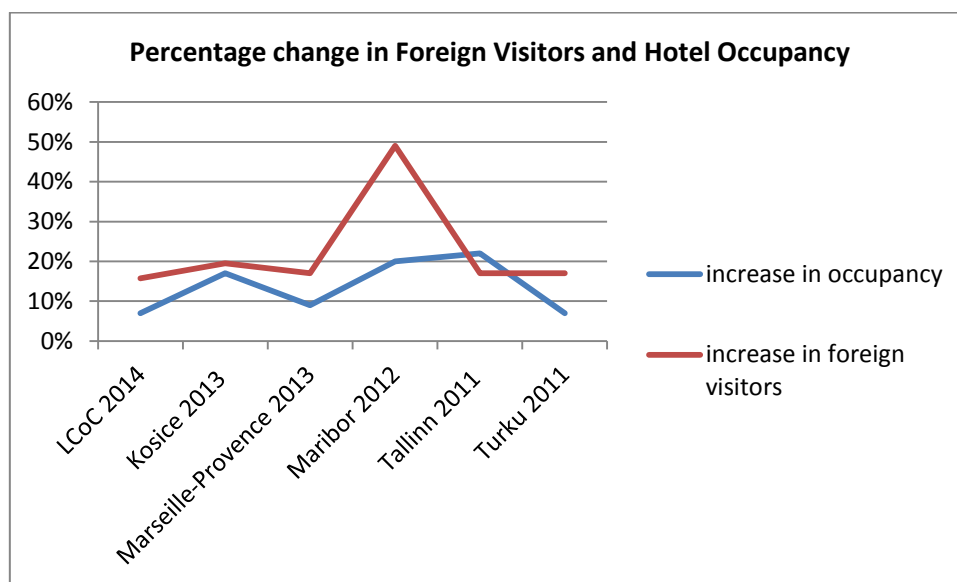
Fáilte Ireland also reported a significant increase of 79% in visitors to King John's Castle (the highest rated fee-charging attraction in the Limerick area in terms of visitor numbers) in 2014. Although visitor numbers had been on an upward trajectory since 2010, this represented the most significant

jump of the period from 47,360 in 2013 to 84,819 in 2014. While it is not possible to assign a causal link between the increase in visitor numbers, and there were other factors influencing the increase including the recent investment of €6 million into the attraction, it is possible to suggest some link between visitors and the general promotion of the cultural value of the city. Fáilte Ireland also collects data on other attractions in Limerick City including the Limerick City Gallery of Art and the Limerick City Museum, however information on visitor numbers for 2014 was not available at the time of publication.

Although these results are broadly positive, it is difficult to assess the impact of the City of Culture in achieving them, particularly in the absence of data at the city level and visitor survey information. Future Cities of Culture should ensure that these issues are addressed as part of its research and evaluation plan in advance of taking up the designation. In addition, any City of Culture should invest in the establishment of a baseline against which city-wide information may be compared.

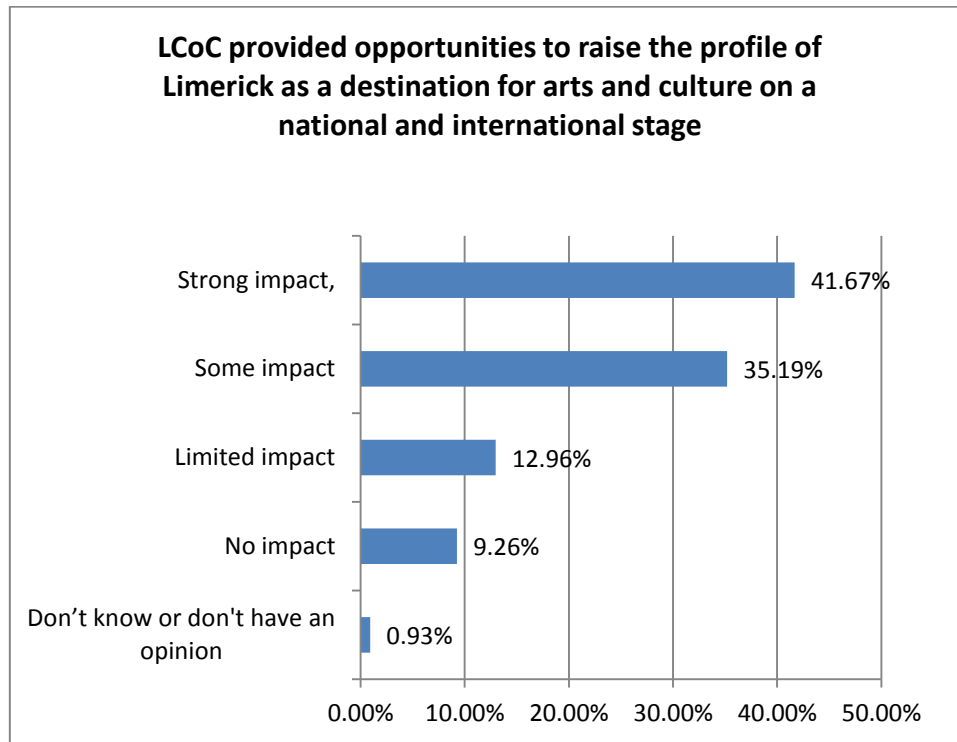
Despite the limitations of the data, in particular the difficulty in disaggregating the number of overseas visitors to Limerick city alone, a comparison with a number of EU Capitals of Culture is presented in Chart 5.14. From the chart, the Shannon region enjoyed similar percentage increases in both occupancy and in foreign visitors as Turku and Marseille-Provence, although its performance was behind the other Capitals of Culture. As mentioned previously, a disaggregated dataset providing information for Limerick city alone would provide greater insights into this comparison.

Chart 5.14 International Comparison: Foreign Visitors and Hotel Occupancy



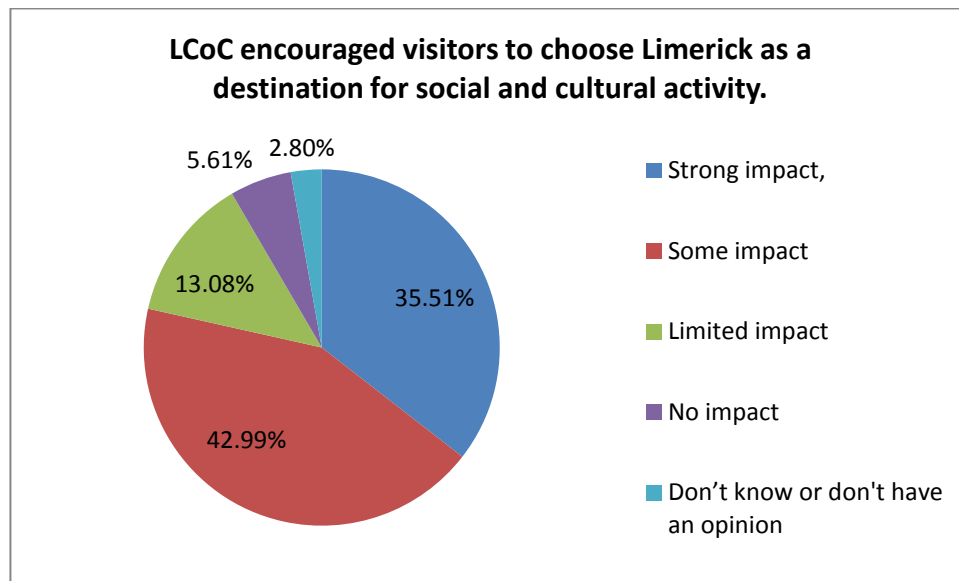
Respondents to the online survey were also asked for their perceptions of opportunities presented for raising the profile of the city and the impact that Limerick City of Culture had on encouraging visitors to Limerick. Looking first to respondents perceptions of the opportunities presented by the City of Culture year, the results found that the vast majority (76.86%) felt that the City of Culture had created opportunities to raise the profile of Limerick as a destination for arts and culture (chart 5.15), while over a fifth of respondents thought that it had limited or no impact.

Chart 5.15 Stakeholder Perspectives: Raising the Profile of Limerick



However, when the question as to the actual impact of the year at attracting visitors was asked (Chart 5.16), the number of respondents indicating that the City of Culture had a strong impact dropped by over 6%, with a greater proportion of positive respondents indicating 'some' rather than 'strong' impact. Although the responses remained largely positive, with over 75% stating that it had a 'strong' or 'some' impact, 13% of respondents indicated that they considered the City of Culture to have had limited impact on attracting visitors and almost 6% indicated that they thought it had no impact.

Chart 5.16 Stakeholder Perspectives: Attracting visitors to Limerick City



Respondents were also asked for their views on the long term impact of the City of Culture in attracting visitors, with almost 61% agreeing that it would encourage visitors in future years (albeit with a greater proportion tending to agree rather than strongly agreeing) and 16% indicating that they did not think it would. A high proportion of respondents (23%) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. In all, these findings show that the vast majority of respondents considered the year to have had a positive impact on the image and attractiveness of the city as a cultural destination.

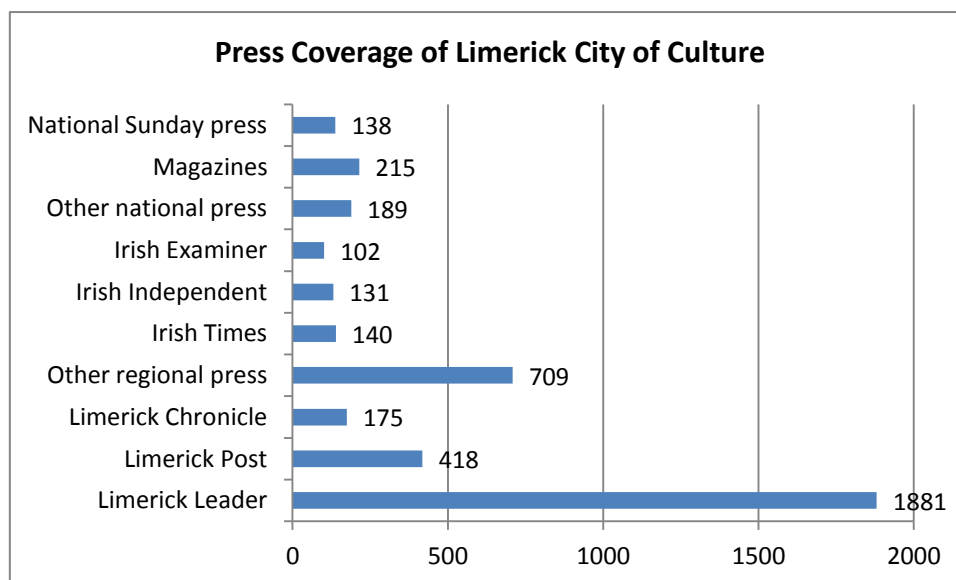
5.3.2. *Media Coverage*

Limerick City of Culture engaged Kantar Media to undertake quantitative analysis of all press and broadcast coverage relating to Limerick City of Culture throughout 2014. The coverage was limited to Irish media only. Kantar Media assessed the quantum of coverage and generated a monetary value for what the coverage would have cost through advertising (based on the size of the piece multiplied by the rate card cost of advertising space). Although Kantar Media offer additional analysis of the tone of the coverage, this was not part of the contract for the analysis. Such information is essential for the comprehensive analysis of the outputs of the City of Culture initiative, and should be included as part of any future City of Culture initiative.

Over the course of the year the City of Culture garnered 4,887 press and broadcast articles which Kantar Media valued at €13,731,812 in advertising value. The majority of articles were in print media (4,098) of which 3,183 were in regional titles. Chart 5.17 offers a complete breakdown of the coverage by title or category of titles. As expected the highest numbers of articles, per title, were in Limerick publications: the Limerick Leader, the Limerick Post and the Limerick Chronicle with 1,881, 418 and 175 articles respectively. National daily titles accounted for 562 articles, while national Sunday titles accounted for just 138 articles. National press coverage (excluding Magazines) accounted for just 17.1% of total press coverage, which, in the context of a national designation for a City of Culture appears quite low. Limerick City of Culture was in the headline of 421 articles or

10.3%, however, this may be explained by the fact that many articles related to particular elements of the cultural programme rather than focusing on the designation itself.

Chart 5.17 Press Coverage of the Limerick City of Culture by Title

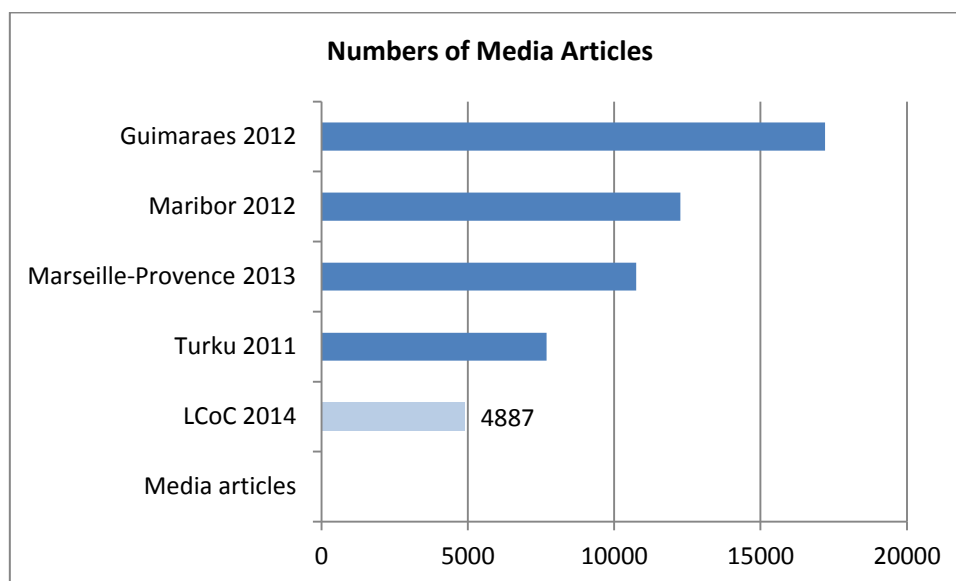


Although Chart 4.3 (Chapter 4) showed that the highest numbers of projects were in May and October, the highest levels of press articles occurred in January (622), March (399) and September (379). These align with the performances of three of the flagship international events in those months: Riverdance (January), Fuerza Bruta! (March) and Royal de Luxe (September). The high level of articles in January may also have been influenced by coverage of the administrative changes that generated media commentary at the end of 2013.

Kantar Media also analysed coverage of the Limerick City of Culture in broadcast media over the period. It reported a total of 789 broadcast items spanning 4,778 minutes of air time. 55% of this coverage was provided by Limerick 95 FM which transmitted 434 segments spanning 2,895 minutes. The next highest station was RTÉ Radio 1 at 8.6% (71 items) followed by Newstalk, Today FM, RTE 1, TV3 and Galway Bay FM. TV coverage accounted for 10% of all broadcast media coverage with RTE 1 and TV3 airing 39 and 32 items respectively.

In terms of an international comparison of these results, chart 5.18 compares Limerick's performance with a number of EU Capitals of Culture. Limerick appears at the bottom of the table with just 4,887 media articles which does not compare well with the highest performing city, Guimaraes with 17,200 articles. While this may be a function of the relatively low marketing and communications budget assigned to the Limerick City of Culture, it should be noted that the Limerick figures do not include articles published on the internet or in foreign media, both of which are included in many of the EU Capitals of Culture.

Chart 5.18 International Comparison: Numbers of Media Articles



When media type is taken into consideration in table 5.6 (and it is noted that this information is only available for a limited number of EU Capitals of Culture), Limerick’s performance is significantly ahead of Turku in terms of broadcast media, although it remains behind both Marseille-Provence and Turku in terms of print media. Again, it is uncertain what impact including foreign media in these figures might have had on Limerick’s performance.

Table 5.6 International Comparison: Articles broken down by media type.

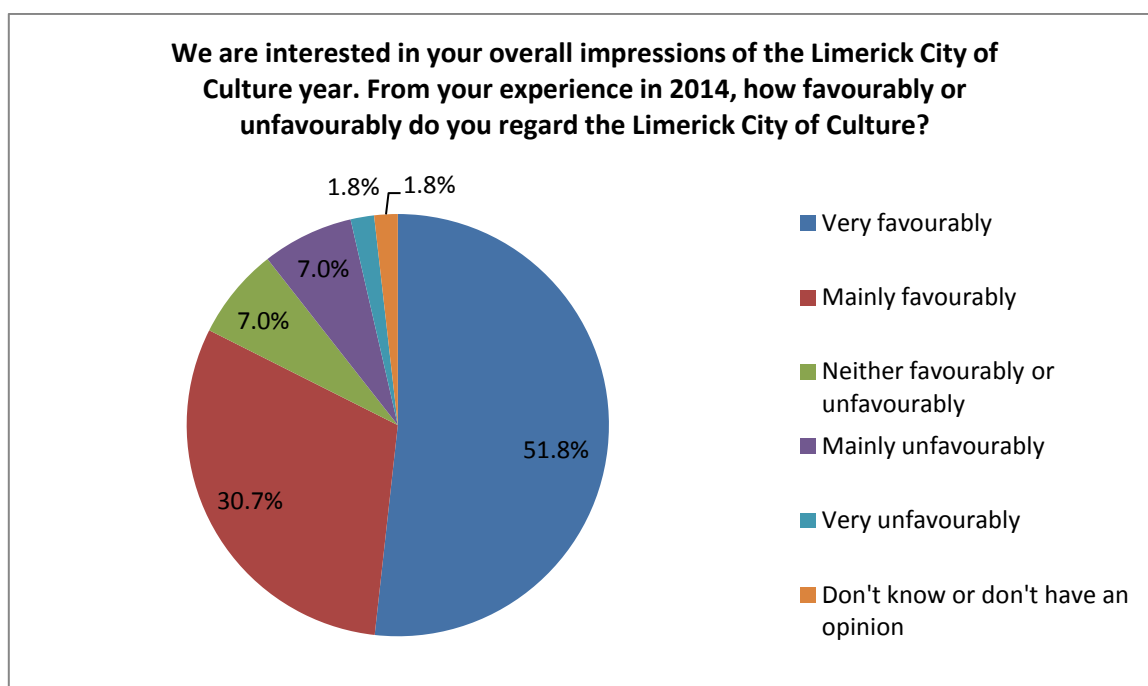
	LCoC 2014	Marseille-Provence 2013	Turku 2011
print media	4,098	8,928	5,075
broadcast media	789	1,721	315

5.3.3. *Awareness & Attitudes*

This section focuses on the public survey, as a proxy measure of the overall awareness of and attitudes to the City of Culture year, although where considered relevant, responses from the project contacts group are also included.

In terms of overall impressions of the year, 82.5% of public respondents indicated that their experience of the City of Culture year was either very favourable or mainly favourable. 7% of respondents indicated a neutral position while 8.8% indicated that their experience was mainly or very unfavourable. These responses are set out in chart 5.19.

Chart 5.19 Public Survey: Experience of the Limerick City of Culture year



Funding recipients were also asked for their impressions of the year with a significant 96.1% indicating that they considered it favourably. Of these, slightly more funding recipients considered it very favourably (53.8%) than respondents in the public group, with significantly more considering it mainly favourable (42.3%). Only 3.8% of funding recipients indicated that their impression was mainly unfavourable. The likelihood of a positive bias among funding recipients, as distinct from unsuccessful applicants or others, should be borne in mind in considering this result.

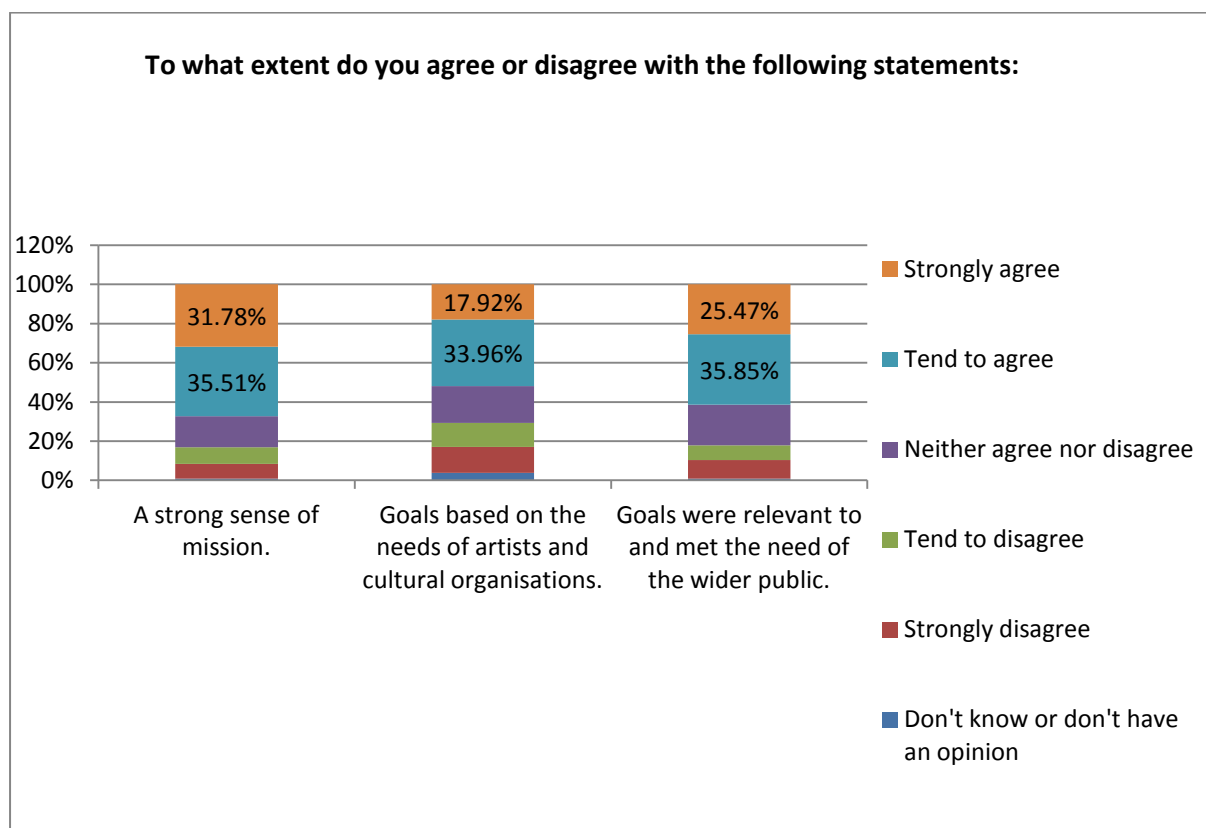
Respondents to the public survey were also asked how they would speak about the City of Culture to other people, with a similar level (82.1%) indicating that they would speak highly of the year. Interestingly, a higher percentage of respondents indicated that they would be critical of the year when speaking to other people (13.7%) than those that reported an unfavourable experience of the year, with fewer respondents indicating a neutral or absent opinion on the question (4.3%) than for the experience question. As with the previous question, a greater proportion of funding recipients (92.3%) indicated that they would speak highly of the year than members of the public with 3.8% indicating that they would be neutral or critical of the year. In addition, 96.1% of funding recipients indicated that they year had a positive or a very positive impact on their activities, with just 3.8% indicating a neutral position on the question. There were no negative responses to the question.

In terms of the goals and objectives of the City of Culture year, respondents were asked to consider whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

- Limerick City of Culture has a strong sense of mission.
- Limerick City of Culture set its goals and priorities based on the needs of artists and arts and cultural organisations.
- Limerick City of Culture’s goals and priorities were relevant to and met the needs of the public.

The breakdown of responses to these questions from the public survey is set out in chart 5.20. It is notable that 67.29% of respondents from the public cohort and 76% of funding recipients indicated that Limerick City of Culture had a strong sense of mission. However, when it came to the detail of that mission 52% of public respondents thought that the goals were based on the needs of artists and cultural organisations while slightly more (61.32%) felt that the goals and priorities were relevant to and met the needs of the public. This latter finding can be considered a positive from the public cohort. Interestingly, a far lower proportion of funding recipients (44%) considered that the goals and priorities of the City of Culture year were based on their needs relative to the public, with 56% indicating that they thought the goals and priorities were oriented towards the needs of the public.

Chart 5.20 Stakeholder Perspectives: Goals and Objectives



Although it was not possible to assess the level of impact the City of Culture had on national or international perceptions of the City, the public survey did offer some perspective into the opinions of residents. Over half of respondents (51%) indicated that they considered the City of Culture year as having a strong impact on the image of the City, with a further 28% indicating that the initiative had some impact. Significantly, less than 5% of respondents indicated that the year had no impact on the image of the city, which can be considered a positive outcome for the overall initiative.

In addition, 41.67% of respondents indicated that they considered the City of Culture to have had a strong impact on the profile of Limerick as a destination for arts and culture on a national and international stage. In general, responses to this question were slightly less favourable, with 35.18% indicating some impact, 12.96% indicating limited impact and 9.26% indicating no impact at all.

Again, the link may be made here to the limited marketing and communications budget which may have contributed to a perception of a lack of visibility of the year at national and international levels.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

This section brings together the conclusions reached following the analysis of the administration and operation, income and expenditure, and outputs of the Limerick City of Culture year. As with the European Capitals of Culture, the conclusions are clustered around the efficiency of the City of Culture year and its effectiveness at achieving its objectives. There are also some conclusions around the perceived legacy and impact of the year.

6.1.1. *Efficiency*

To provide context for the evaluation of the year and to assess the efficiency with which the City of Culture year operated, the research included a brief analysis of the operation and administration of the Limerick City of Culture year, as well as considering how it generated income and how its expenditure compared with similar initiatives internationally.

The evaluation examined the sources of income for the Limerick City of Culture year, finding that 69% came from central Government with the balance from local Government, sponsorship and event receipts. The proportion of funding from both central Government and the public sector generally was found to be higher than international comparators, although this is explained, in part, by the difficulties experienced in generating sponsorship income. Although the overall number and quantum of sponsorships received relative to initial estimates was lower than expected, Limerick performed better at generating sponsorship income both in percentage and absolute terms than many of the EU Capitals of Culture as well as generating in-kind supports from the public and private sectors. In addition, it was found that Limerick performed well in terms of generating event receipts, with the third highest event receipts as a percentage of total income of the cities examined.

Following the examination of expenditure by Limerick City of Culture, it is clear that the city performed well against international comparators in the proportion of funding assigned to the cultural programme. However the analysis noted divergence between Limerick and the other cities examined in the level of expenditure on marketing and communications i.e. only 3.7% was invested by Limerick relative to an EU Capitals of Culture average of 14.46%. Although it may be difficult to justify expenditure away from the cultural programme, it is considered essential that sufficient funding be assigned to this area both in terms of raising awareness of the event among the public but also in terms of financial benefits like generating sponsorship and box office sales.

The evaluation also examined how the City of Culture operated and, in more detail, the breakdown of expenditure on its administration. From this, it is concluded that the Department and local authority had a clear set of operational and funding arrangements in place prior to the title year which ensured the necessary oversight arrangements were in place for the Department. In undertaking its work, the board of the Limerick National City of Culture Ltd. had put in place sufficient procedures and structures to guide its operations in a way that was in line with best practice within the public sector. That said, an examination of the application of these procedures and structures was outside the scope of this evaluation.

From the examination of the City of Culture's operational and management structures, it was concluded that the board of the Limerick National City of Culture Ltd. had a broad range of skills and represented a range of sectoral interests. This finding is in part due to the inclusion of additional representatives from the cultural sector in early 2014. That said, the absence of a specific board member with professional legal experience was noted. The City of Culture also compared favourably with international examples in terms of its overall staff cohort, although there was some divergence between the levels of responsibility for staff management between the City of Culture and the Civil Service. Staff costs were lower than originally budgeted for, although they were slightly less competitive than those of the Arts Council. As a proportion of overall costs, Limerick's staff costs compared well with European Capitals of Culture, and were found to be at the lower end of the scale for the cities examined.

The evaluation found the City of Culture's non-pay administration expenditure was a modest 2.23% of the total expenditure on the City of Culture year, although it notes that the final expenditure on non-pay administration almost 10% higher than the initial budget. It is also noted that other categories of expenditure e.g. project operations costs were not included as part of the overall administration costs, which would have seen higher levels of administration costs and a less favourable comparison with the Arts Council. However, even at this higher level, the costs (on a proportional basis) remained within the range of the Capitals of Culture examined and the administration costs were found not to have contributed to any inefficiency in the operation of the City of Culture year.

6.1.2. *Effectiveness*

Chapters 4 and 5 of the report assessed the outputs of the City of Culture year against the original objectives set by Limerick, and against a number of EU Capitals of Culture.

The first objective – *Creativity and Innovation* – examined the numbers of projects and events supported, the value of that support, the artists and creative employed, and the level of original works created. From the analysis it is clear that the level of projects and events delivered, particularly in the context of the amount of funding available for the cultural programme, compares very well with the EU Capitals of Culture examined. Although the average cost per project supported is higher than a number of international comparators, it is still mid-table for the cities examined. In addition, the distribution of projects throughout the year saw an average of 12 projects being delivered per month, with peaks in activity in May and October of 21 and 20 projects respectively.

The cultural programme consisted of 156 projects delivered over of four strands; International, Commissioning, Legacy, 'Made in Limerick' as well as a small number of Other projects. The total value of the cultural programme was €8 million. Each strand was analysed to assess how it achieved its objectives, levels of grants provided, and the approach to ticketing events. Where suitable comparators were available e.g. grants under a number of strands were compared with average grant funding from the Arts Council, Limerick was found to have performed quite well, although a lack of differentiation in the grant application process was noted as needing improvement.

A particular benefit of Limerick's cultural programme was the opportunity to support artists and other creative workers. In all, the programme supported 2,400 artists from Limerick, 1,060 artists

from outside Limerick (including international artists) and 4,158 staff working on the individual projects. Over the year, 41% of projects supported reported that their project had included a commission for an original work, with a total of 365 original works delivered as part of the year of culture.

The second objective for Limerick City of Culture was to support access to and participation in cultural activities for the whole population, as well as for particular groups. Over the year an estimated 2.625 million people attended events delivered as part of the Limerick City of Culture initiative, a finding that compares favourably with the results from EU Capitals of Culture. In terms of attendances by different groups, 41% of projects targeted young people and children, with over 8 thousand school children attending events. That said, it is noted that information relating to such attendances was limited to events held in school settings which may have influenced the relatively poor comparison with a number of EU Capitals of Culture. Another measure of participation examined was the number of volunteers who participated in the programme. In all 209 volunteers participated directly in the flagship events for the Limerick City of Culture, with projects themselves generating over 2,000 more volunteers. Some limitations in the delivery of the volunteering contract were noted in the report.

The third objective for the City of Culture was to promote partnership and collaboration among artists and with the community. Investment in cultural infrastructure was noted as an important output indicator in creating an environment conducive for partnerships and collaborations. Over the year, a total investment of just over €1 million was made in cultural infrastructure of which two thirds were invested directly in the Culture Factory. The balance was invested in a number of projects including both temporary and permanent creative spaces. The year saw two thirds of projects involved in collaborative work, with 333 collaborations with Limerick artists, 152 with Irish artists and 132 with international artists. The 'Made in Limerick' strand saw the highest proportion of collaborative projects (72%).

The final objective of the City of Culture was *passport and connectivity* which considers the national and international collaborations created as a result of the initiative, as well as the national and international perceptions of the city as a creative and tourism hub. 132 collaborations with international artists were delivered as part of the year, as well as a dedicated strand of flagship international acts. In terms of tourism output, there was limited data available at city level with regional data used as a proxy. Over the year, Limerick saw a 7% increase in hotel occupancy, while the Shannon region enjoyed a 16% increase in overseas visitors. While it cannot be inferred that the trends discussed indicate a casual effect of the City of Culture, it is noteworthy that the positive trends discussed are similar to those observed in a number of capitals of culture. The City of Culture had 4,887 articles in both press and broadcast media, which is lower than was recorded for other cities examined. In general, the limited nature of the marketing and communications budget was considered a possible factor influencing this finding.

Following the analysis, it is clear that the City of Culture year delivered on its objectives, with clear outputs for each of the four objectives. Within the cultural programme, the 'Made in Limerick' strand consistently appears to deliver greater levels of outputs, relative to the investment. Where comparisons were possible with other cities, Limerick's performance was also generally positive and,

on balance, it may be concluded that the Limerick City of Culture was effective at delivering on its objectives. It should be noted, however, that the limited availability of comparators or a baseline against which performance could be rated impacts on the ability of the research to measure performance in some cases.

6.1.3. *Perceived Impact & Legacy*

The online surveys of the public and funding recipients were an important element of the research, particularly in terms of assessing the perceptions of the legacy and impact of the City of Culture year in the absence of a longitudinal dataset. The results of the survey were overwhelmingly positive in terms of impact, with greater levels of positivity among funding recipients. Although still positive, the impressions of members of the public as to the long-term legacy of the year, were slightly less positive. Some of the key findings from these surveys are summarised as follows:

- 82.5% of the public indicated that their experience of the Limerick City of Culture was very favourable or mainly favourable;
- 79% of the public found that the City of Culture had either a strong or some impact on re-imagining the city (88% for funding recipients);
- 63% of the public considered that the City of Culture had a strong or some impact on the development of Limerick as a hub for innovative thinking over the long-term (60% for funding recipients);
- 72% of the public thought that the City of Culture had a strong or some impact on improving access to and participation in the arts and culture (84% for funding recipients);
- 63.5% of the public felt that the City of Culture had a strong or some impact on building partnerships between artists, communities and statutory agencies (80% for funding recipients). When asked whether these partnerships would endure, 49% of the public felt that they would (68% of funding recipients); and
- 77% of the public felt the City of Culture had created opportunities to raise the profile of the city, although a smaller proportion (61%) felt that it would have a long-term impact on attracting visitors to the city.

6.2. Recommendations

Throughout the evaluation, a number of recommendations were identified for consideration by Limerick City of Culture, but more importantly, for future Cities of Culture. The recommendations identified in earlier chapters fall into three broad categories, as follows:

- Strategic Planning;
- Administration and Operation; and
- Evaluation and Impact Assessment.

6.2.1. *Strategic Planning*

The evaluation made a number of recommendations around the planning for and security of income for future Cities of Culture, with a view to minimising dependence on a single funding source as well as to protect the cultural programme from exposure to high-cost or cost overruns on projects. These are summarised as follows:

- To ensure secure funding for the cultural programme in future Cities of Culture, it is considered essential that all sources of funding, both public and private, should be fully explored as part of the preparatory work for the year. This should mitigate against over-dependence on any single funding source.
- A rebalancing of funding from central to local government sources should be considered, in line with the approach taken internationally.
- A sponsorship strategy should be required as part of the bid process with negotiations on sponsorship commencing at least a year in advance of the title year.
- Sufficient funding should be designated for marketing and communications activities to ensure awareness of the title year, but also to support sponsorship generation and box office sales.
- The use of co-funded productions should be encouraged to minimise exposure to the organising body from the risks associated with rising production costs or deficits in event receipts.
- The revenue-generating potential of high-cost programming should be taken into consideration in the design of the cultural programme with a view to minimising their impact on the overall programme funding. A clear strategy for the use of complimentary tickets, including a statement on the objectives to be achieved from issuing such tickets e.g. benefit for sponsors, awareness raising etc. should be put in place prior to the title year.
- Investment strategies for cultural infrastructure should be prepared in advance of the title year and should include a robust appraisal of all projects, including estimated usage levels (subject to sensitivity testing).

The cultural programme also offers opportunities to support artists and other creative workers. Future Cities of Culture should take into account the potential for different programme strands to generate high employment for relatively low costs, and find a balance between this objective and the need to support high value projects.

6.2.2. Administration & Operation

The evaluation identified a number of areas where the administration and operation of future Cities of Culture could be improved:

- All future Cities of Culture should apply a comprehensive skills matrix to the management and oversight structure e.g. board of directors for the year. This is to ensure that the board or management structure has sufficient experience to effectively deliver on the objectives of the year without depending on advice from outside bodies;
- To ensure the maximum funding is available for the cultural programme, every effort should be taken by future title holders to ensure that staff costs and non-pay administration are maintained at the lowest possible level to maximise the funding available for investment in the cultural programme;

Future Cities of Culture could also learn from the experience of the application process for grant funding in Limerick - a single application and assessment process. While this process did require projects to link with the programme's objectives, it is considered that a more tailored approach to the application process based on proposed value should be applied to such grant programmes in

future. This will ensure that applicants for relatively small grant amounts would not expend a disproportionate amount of effort in the preparation of the application and that higher value projects will be required to provide more detailed information and be subject to a more rigorous assessment.

A general recommendation arising from the evaluation is that future Cities of Culture should ensure that any outsourcing of functions e.g. sponsorship generation, volunteer management etc. should have a clearly set out targets and performance requirements as part of the contract documentation. These should be measured against pre-agreed milestones throughout the duration of the contract.

6.2.3. *Evaluation & Impact Assessment*

The analysis for this evaluation was limited in a number of areas due to the lack of data, the absence of a baseline from which to measure outputs/impact, and the absence of disaggregated data for the city. In that regard, the evaluation includes a range of recommendations for future Cities of Culture on data collection and management which should be addressed prior to the title year, as follows:

- Arising from the application of the European Capitals of Culture evaluation framework to this National City of Culture evaluation, it is considered important that future Cities of Culture would ensure that data supporting all of the relevant research indicators are to be collected as part of the title year and reviewed to ensure a complete and accurate data set.
- International best practice should be applied in the establishment of a baseline prior to the title year and against which these data can be analysed.
- Future Cities of Culture should assess their income based on a baseline derived from the central Government and Local Authority funding which would have been spent anyway incorporating administration, programming and marketing expenditure.
- From the analysis, it was found that projects did not always meet the objectives of the particular strand they were supported under. While this may have been due to the evolving nature of the programme or categorisation error, it is important for future Cities of Culture that all projects funded under a particular strand contribute to the achievement of the objectives of that strand be they raising international profile, enhancing creativity through original works, promoting community involvement etc.
- In assessing the media coverage of a city of culture title year, it is critical that the tone of the articles be examined as well as the amount of coverage, and that international media be included in the data set as well as local and national media outlets.

Bibliography

2 into 3 (2015) *Irish Arts Sector: Private Investment Report 2015* Dublin: Arts Council

Available at:

http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Publications/Research_reports/Private-Investment-Report-2015-final.pdf

Arts Council (2015) *Annual Report 2014*, Dublin: Arts Council

Available at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/AC%20AR14_final_15July2015.pdf

Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht, Department of (2015) *Value for Money and Policy Review of the Arts Council*, Dublin: Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht

Available at: <http://www.ahg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2015/09/value-for-money-and-policy-review-of-the-arts-council1.pdf>

European Capitals of Culture Policy Group (2010) *ECOC Policy Group Research Framework*

Available at: https://ecocpolicygroup.files.wordpress.com/2009/11/ecoc-policy-group_research-framework1.pdf

Fáilte Ireland (2015) *Domestic Tourism 2014 – An overview of Irish residents’ travel within the Republic of Ireland in 2014*.

Available at:

http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/3_Research_Insights/2_Regional_SurveysReports/Domestic-tourism-performance-in-2014.pdf?ext=.pdf

Fáilte Ireland (2015) *Tourism Facts 2014*

Available at:

http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/3_Research_Insights/3_General_SurveysReports/Failte-Ireland-Tourism-Facts-2014-update.pdf?ext=.pdf

Fox, T., Rampton, J. (2015) *Ex-post evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture – Final Report*, Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union

Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/documents/ecoc-2014-report_en.pdf

Grant Thornton (2015) *Limerick National City of Culture 2014 economic impact assessment*, Limerick: Limerick 2020

Available at: https://issuu.com/limerick2020/docs/Incoc_-_final_report_as_issued_-_5/1

McAteer, N., Rampton, J., France, J., Tajtáková, M., Lehouelleur, S. (2014) *Ex-post evaluation of the 2013 European Capitals of Culture*, Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union

Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/documents/ecoc-2013-full-report.pdf>

Rampton, J., Mozuraityte, N., Andersson, H., Reincke, E. (2012) *Ex-post evaluation of 2011 European Capitals of Culture*, Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union

Available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/documents/ecoc/2011/evaluation_en.pdf

Theatre Forum (2013) *Audiences for the Performing Arts in Ireland*. Dublin: Theatre Forum

Theatre Forum (2015) *Limerick National City of Culture Social Impact study*. Limerick: Limerick 2020

Available at: <https://issuu.com/limerick2020/docs/lnc report digitalprint/1>

Appendix 1: Thematic Clusters and Results Indicators recommended by the European Capitals of Culture Policy Group

Themes					
Cultural vibrancy and sustainability	Access & Participation	Identity, image and place	Process management	Economic impacts	European dimension
Indicators under each theme					
No. of original art works commissioned	No. Of events	No. of national and local press articles referencing the ECoC	income generated by the delivery agency	% change in visitors to city	No. of cross border co-operations
No. of new artistic collaborations established	Attendance at events	National perception of the ECoC e.g. Recognition rate, likelihood to visit	Expenditure	% change in visitor spend	Perceptions of European-ness
	Demographics of event participation			% change in international visitors to the city	
				Total room nights sold	

Appendix 2: Board of Directors, Limerick National City of Culture Ltd.

Pat Cox (Chair)	Marion Hurley
Michael Collins	Orlaith McBride
Tom Gilligan	Conn Murray
James John Lawlor	Tim O'Connor
Brian McEnery	David O'Hora
Paul O'Connell	Kevin Sheahan
Karen O'Donnell O'Connor	William Whelan
Neil Pakey	Mike Fitzpatrick (Director)
Michael Sheahan	Elaine O'Connor (Secretary)
Louise Donlon	

Karen Corcoran and Shabbir Garana resigned as directors on 10 October 2013.

John Sheahan and Kathleen Ledding resigned as directors on 11 July 2014.